

ATTENDANCE POLICY & ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2024-25

This document, which applies to the whole College inclusive of boarding, is publicly available on the David Game College (DGC) website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the College office.

Scope: All who work, volunteer or supply services to our College have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal College hours, including activities away from College. All new employees and volunteers are required to state that they have read, understood and will abide by this policy and its procedural documents and confirm this by signing the Policies Register.

Statutory Framework: This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve College attendance, DfE \(August 2024\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(2025\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2025\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(December 2023\)](#)
- The Single Equalities Policy (DGC: September 2024)
- Summary table of responsibilities for College attendance (DfE: September 2024)

Review: There is a full annual review of this policy and procedures by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. It is also updated in the interim, as may be required, to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which students are or may be exposed. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures, will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed policy, which will be made available to them in either in writing or electronically.

Reviewed: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Signed

David Game
CEO and Proprietor

John Dalton
Principal

At David Game College, ensuring that students have a full attendance is fundamental to everyone's success. There is a strong link between under-achievement and poor attendance. Those students who regularly attend make better progress, both socially and academically, which is why we ask for a 100% attendance, but have a realistic target attendance of a minimum 95%.

Please note that the attendance and engagement policy and principles still apply during any government enforced lockdowns and/or if the student is accessing the curriculum remotely. There all students must attend their classes unless they have a valid reason for an authorised absence.

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It is also important that we maintain parents and students awareness of the importance of full-time attendance and make clear the correlations between attendance and learning.

At David Game College, our ambition is for all students to strive for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellent attendance for all students and expect students to be in College every session and every day that College is open within the academic year. We consider this paramount to students achieving their full potential and enhancing lifelong outcomes. Our Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of students and is an integral part of our College ethos.

Some students find it harder than others to attend College and therefore at all stages of improving attendance we will work together with parents/carers, students and relevant partner agencies to remove any barriers and build strong and trusting relationships. Promoting and ensuring excellent attendance is everybody's business within our College and community.

Aims and ethos

Our College aims to meet its obligations with regard to College attendance by ensuring every student has access to a full-time and efficient education to which they are entitled. David Game College acts early to address any patterns of irregular attendance aiming to create a culture in which the importance of good College attendance is understood, valued, and supported by all.

By providing a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, all College staff, parents/carers, students, and partners can work together to remove any barriers affecting attendance.

This policy sets out our College's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents¹ must follow to report their child's absence from College and to remind them of their legal duty, to ensure their child attends College regularly.

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently, considering the individual needs of our students and their families who may have specific barriers to attendance. We have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Safeguarding and Attendance

David Game College will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all students as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a student's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any student who is absent from College when the College has made all reasonable enquiries and cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the student's welfare and safety.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the government guidance 2022 [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's 2015 statutory guidance on [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures](#). These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern College attendance

¹ Education law defines parents as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has day to day care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.

including:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as relevant)
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Sentencing Act 2020
- College Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (*replacing the 2006 regs*)
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (*as amended*)

Using data to support improvements in attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's Collegeing and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a student as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of College across the academic year, for whatever reason. For students who miss more than 50% of possible sessions they are defined as 'severely absent'.

The College will ensure that data is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any student becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include identifying the individual needs of students; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where a formalised approach in conjunction with the local authority is required in line with the DfE guidance Working Together to Improve College Attendance.

Understanding Barriers to Attendance

In relation to understanding barriers to attendance, we will ensure all students and parents are treated with dignity and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and College that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing to enhance understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a student or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

We will support students and parents by working together to address any in-College barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the College's control, all partners should work together to support students and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the College to work in conjunction with relevant partners.

Some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. In working with parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers such students may face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

In line with DfE expectations, reduced timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period, to support students to reintegrate back into education and access full time provision.

The College is committed to share information and work collaboratively with local authorities and external partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Staff Training on Attendance

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard students. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that College staff require to address them. The College therefore will facilitate training for all staff to understand:

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances,
- the law and requirements of Colleges including on the keeping of student registers
- the College/trusts' strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance,
- processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support for students who need it.

For staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, they will receive training to include the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data and any additional training that would be beneficial to support students experiencing attendance

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challenges.

Contents of the Admissions Register

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the College roll) must contain specific personal details of every student in the College along with the date of admission or re-admission to the College, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the College last attended. The College will enter students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the College has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the student will attend.

A student's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date. Therefore, we encourage parents to inform the College of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

Contents of Attendance Register

In addition to the admissions register the law makes it clear that Colleges must take an attendance register at the start of the first session of each College day and once during the second (afternoon) session. On each occasion, the College must record whether each student is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to improve attendance and is supported by the use of our Management Information System to record attendance information.

Present at College (and Lateness)

Students are marked present if they are in College when the register is taken. If a student leaves the College premises after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend College on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

The Principal will meet with parents of those children who are frequently late arriving at College to investigate reasons and suggest solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

Our students of compulsory College age must arrive between 8.30-9.30am on each College day.

Our morning register is and will be kept open until 9.30am

Our afternoon register is taken at 12.30pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm

A student who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late (L), which counts as present.

If a student arrives after the register has closed they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code "Late after registers close" (U) which is an unauthorised absence mark. However, if the student is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised and coded accordingly.

See DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve College Attendance](#).

All students, irrespective of their age, will also have a class attendance register taken, either manually or electronically. These are used for the purposes of student accountability and generating attendance data for members of the GAC and for internal analysis.

Parent/carer(s) can help us by:

- ensuring your child/ward attends College regularly;

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- telephone each day (in the morning before 9am) to confirm any absence and give us the reason and tell us when the student is likely to return to College;
- arranging all non-emergency medical appointments outside of College hours;
- providing medical verification where illness-absence is frequent or prolonged;
- ensuring that your child not only attends, but is also punctual to classes;
- ensuring that all students of Compulsory College Age agree to sign in and out in reception and abide by the rules as set out by the Head of GCSE; and
- ensuring students attend if shielding owing to a communicable disease or similar health restrictions.

We shall:

- follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and emails as necessary;
- write to parents/guardians about poor attendance and ask them for a meeting to explain absences that are frequent or excessive;
- inform you if your child has poor punctuality; and
- show zero-tolerance to students who have persistent absence for no valid or authorised reason.

This Policy is available on-line at www.davidgamecollege.com

1. We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format.
2. We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments*. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of the policy.

*Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation. Arrangements regarding attendance with UFP may slightly differ.

For all enquiries in respect of this policy, please contact:

Named person: **John Dalton**
Principal
David Game College
31 Jewry Street
City of London
EC3N 2ET

Tel: 020 7221 6665

Rationale: This policy covers the principal elements of what the College considers necessary for good and punctual attendance by students. Its formulation is designed to enhance consistency in approach to attendance across the different programmes at David Game College ("the College"). The College is committed to offering opportunities for the development of all students in ways that meet individual needs. One aspect of this is a commitment to improving retention and achievement through raising standards of attendance and punctuality.

The College expects and demands a 100% attendance by all students as it recognises the important correlation between students' absence and academic progress. Naturally, students may be ill from time to time or have to visit universities etc. It is important that authorised absences are logged and understood. The College has zero tolerance for unauthorised absences. For both visa and non-visa students the College will also look for patterns of non-attendance and make efforts to challenge the student and, if

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necessary, permanently exclude the student or report them to the relevant authority. The Leadership Team sets targets for overall student attendance.

Aim: This policy aims to assist all students to take responsibility for their full and prompt attendance which will enhance their learning experience, develop their personal skills and promote retention, achievement and progression. In the case of Compulsory College Age (CSA) students, the policy is intended to ensure full compliance with the requirements of ISI.

Principles on which the policy is based:

There are four principles underpinning the College's approach to student attendance

- a. Student attendance should be managed across the College.
- b. Targets for student attendance rates should be set and monitored across all College programmes.
- c. Punctuality and full attendance at lessons should be a benchmark by which the quality of the College's teaching and learning is judged.
- d. Every effort should be made to maximise punctuality and attendance.

Authorised Absence

'Authorised absence' means that the College has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory College age to be away from the College or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the College:

Illness

The NHS has produced a helpful guide for parents regarding childhood illness and College: [Is my Child too ill for College?](#)

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by parents/carers following the College's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the College has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some exceptional circumstances, the College may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the College may seek parental permission to contact the student's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual student.

If the College is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a student has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the College may require medical evidence of some description in order best support the child or young person and to be able to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the College will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the College by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

Parents should email or telephone the College before 9am and leave a message or directly inform a member of staff that their child will not be attending and provide the reasons.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the College on each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the College.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our College supports student mental health and wellbeing following DfE guidance [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for Colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our College's Attendance/Designated Safeguarding Lead (or other key professional in the setting) for further information on the support available.

Online Mental health support and advice can be accessed: [Children's mental health - Every Mind Matters - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/childrensmindmatters)

Parents can also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by telephoning 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

Students taken ill during the College day

If a student is deemed unwell and needs to be sent home during the College day, this decision must be made in agreement with an appropriately authorised member of College staff, in line with the College's safeguarding and health procedures.

In such circumstances, the student must normally be collected from the College office by a parent or by another adult who has been authorised by the parent/carer in advance. No student will be permitted to leave the College site without explicit parental confirmation and the approval of the College.

Where a student is aged 16 or over, and where it is considered appropriate, the College may arrange transport home via a licensed private hire service (e.g. Uber), provided that this transport is organised directly by the College and not by the student. In these cases:

- Parental consent must be obtained in advance for this arrangement;
- A dynamic risk assessment must be carried out by the College, taking into account the student's health, wellbeing, level of alertness, and any additional safeguarding considerations;
- The details of the driver, vehicle, and journey must be recorded and retained by the College until confirmation is received that the student has arrived home safely;
- Such arrangements will not be made where the student appears significantly unwell, distressed, or excessively drowsy, or where the College judges that alternative arrangements would be safer.

The College will always prioritise the safety and welfare of the student when determining the most appropriate arrangements for leaving site due to illness

Medical/Dental Appointments

Medical Appointments and Absence Due to Illness: Parents should try to make appointments outside of College hours wherever possible. Where appointments during College time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the College in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of College for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at College for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the College will need an explanation as to why this is.

If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the College day, they must be signed out of College. No pupil will be allowed to leave the College site without parental confirmation. Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments and must be supported by providing the College with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the College's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we will speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns and look at what support can be put in place to ensure their child's regular attendance at College. If the College is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer. We will invite parents to attend a College-led Attendance Support Panel as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral to the 5-19 Healthy Child Programme team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.²

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support. We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

Religious Observance

Our College acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the College community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of College holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the College will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the College will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Suspensions

If the College decides to send a student home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a temporary suspension. The College will follow the current [DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions](#).

Any exclusion **must** be agreed by the Principal.

The College will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. If the student is a Child in Care, the College will notify the student's carer, social worker and the Virtual College. In other instances, where a student is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the College will also inform their allocated social worker.

First Day of Absence Response

When a child is absent parents/carers will be contacted on the same day to establish the reason for their absence and obtain, if available, evidence to authorise the absence.

Parents will be asked to supply details of **at least three** people who can be contacted in the event of an emergency, and these details will be reviewed on a quarterly basis through parents' evenings/newsletter reminders etc.

If the College is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and there is concern for the welfare and safety of a student, we may request a welfare check from the police.

Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

The College's ethos is to recognise and reward excellent attendance and, equally, for those students who attendance significantly improves over time or following an intervention. Certificates are awarded in such cases in front of their peers and parents are informed.

Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of College during term time.

In line with DfE expectations only very exceptional circumstances will warrant an authorised leave of absence. The College will review each application individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The College will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The College must be satisfied

² This is in accordance with the NSCP [Joint Protocol between Health Services & Colleges in respect of the management of pupil absence from College when medical reasons are cited](#)

that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Attendance/Designated Safeguarding Leads. If any leave of absence is granted, the College will determine the number of days the student can be away from College. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the College's discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend College normally during difficult family times.

Parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the College. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence in order to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for more information).

All term time absence for children in care should be discussed at the child's Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting, in advance where possible, to be considered alongside social care staff and the Virtual College. This permission should be gained before College is approached for approval. The College will contact social care/ the Virtual College in relation to any requests made for term time absence for a child in care.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where the College has not been given a reason or is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence will be unauthorised if a student is absent from College without the permission of the College. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it remains the College's decision whether to authorise an absence or not.

Unauthorised absences are those which the College does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted such as:

- Parents keeping children off College unnecessarily or without reason e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Arrival at College after the register has closed;
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- Day trips and holidays taken during term-time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Principal, including any arranged by other family members or friends;
- Leaving College for no reason during the day;
- Any other absence in term time which has not been agreed.
- In the case of term time leave - if a student is kept away from College longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in legal sanctions, use of penalty notices or prosecution.

Persistently and Severely Absent students (PA and SA)

A student is classed a 'persistent absentee' if they miss 10% or more of their Collegeing across the College year for whatever reason.

A student is classed as 'severely absent' if they miss 50% or more of their College across the College year for whatever reason.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any student that is seen to have reached the PA or SA thresholds or is at risk of moving towards that level, will be prioritised by College. Parents will be informed accordingly.

Approved Educational Activity

When students are attending educational activities off the College site, which have been approved by the College, the register will be marked to show this is the case.

If a student is attending an alternative education provider such as another College for part or all of their education, our College will arrange for the student to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a student is attending an alternative education provider, which is not a College for part or all of their education, we will mark the sessions which the student attends the alternative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). We will liaise regularly with alternative providers to ensure we become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and take follow up action as necessary.

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in DfE attendance guidance)

In accordance with DfE College attendance guidance, our College will record students as 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- Our College site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- The transport provided by our College or the Local Authority is not available and the student's home is not within statutory walking distance. (See the DfE's '[Home to College travel and transport](#)' guidance document, or ask the College for a printed copy.)
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the student from attending College.
- The student is in custody, but still on the College roll. (If the College has evidence that the student is attending educational activities, we can record those sessions as 'present at approved educational activity'.)

Promoting College Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

Sometimes students can be reluctant to attend College. We encourage parents and students to be open and honest with us about the reason for the student's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a College, we need to understand the reasons why a student is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support students and parents in the best way. We believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our students from the outset. It is a central part of our College's vision, values, ethos, and day-to-day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a student, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal attendance action plan or parenting contract being drawn up.

If our College is unable to work in partnership with parents to overcome any barriers preventing regular attendance we may refer a case of poor College attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions. We will show all the steps we have taken to support parents and students and that we have warned the parent/s of children of statutory College age that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter and College records will be shared with the Local Authority.

We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our College will take a holistic, early help approach to the issue and will involve other agencies if deemed necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the College and/or other agencies, or, fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a penalty notice or other legal sanction.

If our College has safeguarding concerns about a student who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

Role	Name	Contact details
Senior Attendance Champion	Nedaa Bela	0207 221 6665
Attendance Officer	Feargal Carty	0207 221 6665
Proprietor/Non-Executive Director for Attendance	John Dalton	0207 221 6665

Improving College attendance is everyone's business. It is a shared responsibility by the Proprietor and Senior Leadership Team, all College staff, parents, students, and the wider College community. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, students and all members of College staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers information about attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the College's target for attendance.
- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all Colleges.

The Senior Management Team (including senior attendance champion) at David Game College will:

- actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to **all** students and their parents;
- form positive relationships with students and parents;
- ensure that there is a whole College approach which reinforces good College attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve;
- monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues;
- ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with;
- ensure that there is a named senior attendance champion to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource;
- return College attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time;
- report the College's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Advisory Committee and executive
- ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site are implemented;
- ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
- develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families;
- document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated;

We are aware that where all other avenues of support to improve attendance have been exhausted, attendance may be enforced through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education (more information can be found under 'National Framework for Penalty Notices').

All staff at David Game College will:

- actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to **all** students and their parents;
- form positive relationships with students and parents;
- contribute to a whole College approach which reinforces good College attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve;
- comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation;
- implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site;
- ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner;
- contribute to the evaluation of College strategies and interventions;
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support students and their families.

The member of staff responsible for attendance will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The member of staff responsible for attendance will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data.
- Undertaking regular attendance meetings with the Senior Attendance Champion, Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO, and other relevant staff members.
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole College attendance.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Coordinating individual action plans for students causing concern including the instigation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan and/ or the implementation of an attendance contract.
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from College without contact from parents.
- Taking an active lead in delivering whole College initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

David Game College requests that parents:

- Ask the College for help if their child is having trouble with any aspect of their Collegework or home and family life so that we can offer support at the earliest opportunity.
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at college.
- Instil the value of education and regular College attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the College if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of College hours.
- Inform the College of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the College by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with College, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both College and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.
- To sign a parent contract.

Students will:

- Be aware of the College's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by College staff, parents and through the College timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at College or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.

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- Follow the College procedure if they arrive late. This will help the College to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a College evacuation.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

In line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices, there is a single, consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by all Colleges in England, including independent Colleges. This threshold is met where a pupil accrues 10 sessions (usually equivalent to five College days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling ten College week period. The sessions do not need to be consecutive and may be made up of any combination of unauthorised absence codes (including G, O and/or U). The ten-College-week period may span different terms, academic years or education settings.

Where this threshold is reached, the College will work with the Local Authority in accordance with its published Code of Conduct. Sanctions may include the issuing of a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child, in line with the national framework. For a first offence, the Penalty Notice will be £160 per parent, per child, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will be charged at £160 per parent, per child, with no reduction for early payment. Where a third offence occurs, the matter may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.

There is no legal entitlement for pupils to take time off during term time for holidays, leisure or recreational purposes, or to participate in protest activity during College hours. The Supreme Court has confirmed that "regular attendance" means attendance in accordance with the rules prescribed by the College.

The College will work proactively with parents and the Local Authority to support regular attendance for all pupils of compulsory College age. Where concerns arise, support will be offered at an early stage and, where necessary, formal action will be taken in accordance with statutory guidance.

Students on Reduced (Part-time) Timetables

Students are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our College is unable to provide a student with a full-time education due to the student's needs, we will work with the student, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. We will not use a part-time timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour. A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit whilst arrangements are made to support the student's return to full-time provision as soon as possible.

Children Missing Education (CME)

Our College will add and delete students from roll in line with Regulation 8 Education law. The College will report any children leaving our College, on part time timetables, attending irregularly, or joining the College outside of usual transition phases. If we have any CME related concerns we will contact attendance@cityoflondon.gov.uk.

Following up Unexplained Absences

Where no contact has been made with the College, the College will contact parents by text, email, telephone or letter to try to establish the reason for a child's absence. When we establish the reason for the absence, we will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason for the absence. If we are unable to establish the reason for absence within 3 College days, we will make the absence as unauthorised, using the **O** code. If we are concerned about a student's absence and are unable to contact the parent/s, we may contact the student's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who we reasonably expect may be able to advise us of the student's whereabouts and safety.

Reporting to Parents

Reporting attendance data to parents is communicated via Head of Year, Attendance Officer and through termly reports.

Where a child's attendance falls below 90% for whatever reason, our College will contact parents to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence

Attendance data is recorded on the College management system (Collegebase) and includes the reasons for absence and whether authorised or unauthorised. When a student's attendance falls below 90% (regardless of their age), their data is shared with our Local Authority for a review.

Working with Local Authority (LA)

The College works closely with attendance officers from the City of London who regularly visit to discuss attendance data and any specific cases and concerns.

The Governance Advisory Committee (GAC)

The GAC is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole College three times per year. They should also support the promotion of regular attendance and provide support and challenge holding the principal to account for the implementation of this policy. GAC members should take interest in the attendance data and hold the SLT to account for any significant changes or drop in attendance.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the College, and for monitoring College-level absence data and reporting it to governance advisory members.

The Principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students and requests fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

DSLs play a crucial role in understanding and acting upon attendance data. Attendance data are discussed at the weekly Safeguarding and Vulnerable Student Committee. Attendance issues can be linked to safeguarding matters or result in a safeguarding issue. Therefore, pattern or developing attendance issues must involve the safeguarding team. Attendance data and specific issues forms a key part of any discussion regarding a child of concern at the weekly Safeguarding and Vulnerable Student Committee.

Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the College and individual student level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head of Years/ Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) as appropriate.
- Arranges calls, home visits and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Co-ordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence (this includes liaison with the Head of Years/DSLs and Safeguarding Team) and advises the Principal as requested.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

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Teachers play a critical role in supporting and promoting good attendance. Teachers should note the absence of a student in their class and ensure, using the accepted methods of logging and reporting, that the relevant attendance staff are aware of their absence and should clarify the reasons for it. Staff are also encouraged to discuss absentees with members of the SLT and through this reporting, ensure that parents are informed. Staff should be encouraged to telephone parents and ask for direct explanations of their child's absence.

Office Staff

College office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the College system. Office staff will ensure the attendance lead is informed of any urgent attendance related concerns

Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 4 months by the Principal, or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared and ratified by members of the Governance Advisory Committee (GAC).

Links with other policies/procedures

This policy is linked to our: Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Inclusion Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and SEND policy.

Attendance in relation to Visa Students (UKVI Compliance)

Many of the students who attend the College have the privilege of securing a study visa, which has clear and specific obligations for the student and the educational setting to which the visa is associated with. The College takes these responsibilities extremely seriously and give considerable priority to compliance. The College has a separate publication on UKVI compliance, which can be read in association with this Attendance Policy.

Terminology: Registration vs “Contact” Points

It is important as part of this policy to be clear about what key concepts mean, especially when applied to our UKVI Policy. After students have been admitted to the College and entered on their course of study, their attendance is recorded and monitored in line with regulations set out in this policy.

Registration points are recorded throughout the period of study. A Registration Point is an event at which a formal record of attendance will be taken, such as a scheduled lesson, a PSHE seminar, UCAS talk, Field Trip or Personal Tutor meeting.

Contact Points. The term Contact Points is used in relation to reporting duties under the Student Sponsor Guidance. Registration Points contribute to the calculation of Contact Points, but they are not the same. There are many more Registration Points than Contact Points in any academic year. The College definition (in terms of UKVI) of an expected Contact Point is a “full day at the College, as determined by the timetable on any given day”. Thus, if a student has 3 lessons in one day, and they miss that day, whilst they will have missed 3 Registration Points, they will only be held to have missed one expected Contact Point. If a student has 4 lessons and they miss one lesson, then they have missed one Registration Point, but not a full Contact Point.

This is to ensure that the College's attendance policy is fair and practical, and students do not find themselves being reported for being legitimately absent (for example if they have a communicable illness such as Covid 19).

Other forms of engagement which are a key feature of study include: independent and self-directed learning, for which students are monitored through their output of homework and coursework submissions, meetings with teachers and personal tutors, performance in formative and summative assessments, and in their overall academic progress.

A student will be reported if they miss 10 consecutive Contact Points without explanation or communication. If a student is found to be in exceptional circumstances (i.e. beyond their control), then a re-consideration may be given following a SLT investigation.

The following may constitute registration points for students (please refer to the Attendance and Engagement Policy in relation to UKVI contact points):

- i. Admission and entry/Re-admission and entry;
- ii. Payment of fees;
- iii. Attendance at scheduled lessons, UCAS and careers sessions, laboratory sessions, subject-related field trips and cultural activities throughout the College year
- iv. Submission of continuously assessed work where applicable (coursework);
- v. Induction classes and events;
- vi. Attendance at summative examinations

Students' Entitlements: Students are entitled to the best opportunities to be successful in their studies. If a student's general attendance and punctuality give the College cause for concern and there is a worry that the student may not complete his/her studies successfully, the student will be contacted by the College Attendance Officer to discuss their progress. An attempt will be made to identify any problems or difficulties and arrangements may be made for special help from the teaching staff or for special tutorials and support. The College Attendance Officer in conjunction with the Heads of Year will listen to any problems raised and will try to give the support and guidance needed to help the learner to be successful. It is part of the student's entitlement that lessons start and end promptly. Every effort will be made to give advance warning of unavoidable changes or cancellations to classes.

Students' Responsibilities: The College requires students to **attend all classes punctually** according to their timetables. Students should not knowingly miss a class for anything other than illness or exceptional circumstances. It is not usually permitted for students to take holidays in term-time. If a student needs to miss a class, the parent or guardian should:

- a. contact the **College Attendance Officer** in order to inform the Heads of Year and member of staff who teaches the lesson(s), in advance, of any planned absence (e.g. for a doctor's or dentist's appointment);
- b. Phone or email the College administrator, as soon as possible, to explain an unplanned absence due to illness. The parent or guardian will be asked for details of the illness and for how long the absence is expected to last;
- c. Explain by letter or email the reasons for absence due to illness lasting more than one week. Addresses will be checked against College records for verification; and
- d. The student must make arrangements to catch up on any work missed during absence.

If a student is **absent without authorisation** (for visa students please refer to Appendix 2) and there has been no response from the parent or guardian, the student will be deemed to have withdrawn from the course after 10 days of absence. There may also be other remedial actions taken (including disciplinary action in some cases) before the end of the two-week absence period, if a student's pattern of attendance and/or punctuality is not of an acceptable standard. Unacceptable attendance and/or punctuality may affect examination entry. Students may also be excluded from classes if they are more than 10 minutes late, unless there are good reasons.

Teaching Staff's Responsibilities

All Teaching Staff are required to:

- a. advise students of the College Attendance Policy during induction;
- b. inform reception of the absence of any student either at the start of a lesson, during the first break or at the end of a lesson
- c. inform the Heads of Year if a student has been absent for two lessons or where attendance is erratic;
- d. mark attendance, absence and lateness in the register and keep registers up-to-date and accurate; use the appropriate nomenclature and symbols (provided in the back of the register) for indicating types of absence;
- e. contact, or arrange for contact with the student or parent/guardian, via the Heads of Year, where appropriate, wherever there is cause for concern;
- f. monitor and report individual and group attendance and punctuality for their classes;
- g. help to support students' return to College, as appropriate;
- h. ensure withdrawal forms are completed, via the attendance officer, as appropriate, where a student has been absent without

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- authorisation for four weeks; and
- i. Start and finish classes on time.

Personal Tutors are required to:

- a. keep other teaching staff informed of issues and actions relating to a student's attendance and punctuality;
- b. monitor and report on students' attendance and punctuality, with the help of teaching and support staff;
- c. refer unresolved issues concerning attendance and punctuality to the College Attendance Officer and the Principal; and
- d. Ensure paperwork regarding student attendance is up-to-date and kept in the tutorial file.

College Management's Responsibilities: The Principal and Heads of Years are responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of this policy and that students have been inducted into it. In addition, the Co-Principals will be responsible for setting annual targets for attendance rates across all College programmes. In conjunction with management information from the register system, the Principal are responsible for facilitating the production of regular timely and accurate attendance data and reports, to allow teaching staff to take prompt action for the benefit of students. Senior staff are also responsible for monitoring those whose attendance falls persistently below 95% and initiate actions to improve attendance for individual students. The College has a specific attendance officer, employed solely for the purpose of managing and monitoring attendance.

Standards by which the success of this policy can be evaluated:

- j. annual targets for attendance are met; to try and keep attendance at no less than 95%;
- k. continually improving attendance and punctuality;
- l. high levels of attendance and punctuality when measured against relevant benchmarks;
- m. swift action to support students with below acceptable benchmarks for attendance and punctuality;
- n. improved student success;
- o. staff compliance with the policy during quality audits and
- p. positive feedback in self-assessment reports; and
- q. Engagement with Attendance Officials from the Local Authority

Responsibility for implementing this policy:

- r. The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy across the College.
- s. The Principal is responsible for overseeing the operation of this policy in the College.
- t. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that academic teaching staff and Personal Tutors collaboratively address the requirements of this policy.
- u. The College staff, which includes Personal Tutors and subject specialists, together with appropriate support staff, are responsible for meeting student entitlement.

Appendix 1: For advice on the appropriate ways in which to record attendance for students of Compulsory College Age, see the relevant government publications regarding College attendance (as cited above). For the regulations affecting migrants who wish to study in the UK, see: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas>

Appendix 2: Student Attendance Policy Procedure

Rationale:

Any student who is sponsored by the College and is given a visa has a responsibility to abide by the rules and regulations of the UKVI and the College's own admissions and policy guidance. Equally, the College, who has been given the authority from the UKVI to issue CAS to students has a significant responsibility to abide by the UKVI Sponsor rules. The ability for an educational establishment to sponsor a student in the UK is recognised as a privilege that has to be earned and requires trust, good record keeping, and effective and efficient reporting. Visa students are made very aware on their arrival at the College of their

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responsibilities and they risk being reported and being asked to leave the UK should they abuse this privilege. The College has a responsibility to select students during their admissions process who are considered suitable for the course that they will study and are likely to successfully complete their course of study. As part of this, students must engage in as many relevant aspects of the College's curriculum as possible.

Attendance is very important for two main reasons: students have made a commitment to work towards achieving academic success by enrolling on their programme of studies. In order to achieve success in their studies it is important that they participate in, and engage fully with, all their scheduled activities such as lectures, workshops and seminars. The College therefore regards attendance as an essential part of students' studies. Further, the College is required by law to have robust systems in place in order to keep track of our students. Under the points-based system, it is the duty of the College as a sponsor to ensure that our students are in compliance with all the requirements of their permission to study in the United Kingdom. In order to achieve this, the College monitors attendance very strictly so that we are able to ensure that our students are not in breach of their legal duties.

The legal framework: If a student is in the UK on a student visa, he/she must aim to attend all lessons and must submit all his/her work on time. To maintain attendance throughout the duration of their course, holders of a student visa are advised that David Game College ("the College") is obliged to comply with the United Kingdom VISA Immigration (UKVI) student rules.

The College Rules:

- All students should attend 100% of lessons
- Students must be punctual for lessons
- Students when they enter the College must register on the InVentry System
- Students of compulsory College age (CSA) must be in College every week day and sign in and out as directed in the rules.
- Students of Compulsory College Age must register on InVentry between 8.30-9.30am and again at 12.30-1.30pm
- All CSA students should be in College for at least 25.5. hours per week.
- If students are absent, their absence must be authorised and backed with a good reason and some evidence
- Students who show a pattern of absence will be warned in writing and if the pattern or further unacceptable absences keep occurring they may be asked to leave the College
- Up to 3 warning letters will be given to students, but the College takes a strict view of absence and will intervene quickly to prevent further absences.
- If a student is on a visa, then they are under strict obligations to respect the right that they have been given through the visa and not to abuse its privilege
- If any visa students has a pattern of absence or simply too many small absences they will be warned; if they persist, they will be reported to UKVI
- If a visa student misses 10 consecutive expected contacts and fails to provide a reason that is acceptable or evidence-based, then they are very likely to be reported to UKVI
- Although each student's situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis, the aforementioned rules will be generally enforced for the purposes of discipline and adherence to the law
- Attendance – as recorded for the Local Authority (LA) is based on registration points for scheduled/timetabled lessons, and do not include attendance for PSHE and RSE

Procedure for Recording Attendance:

- a. The Attendance Officer and Heads of Year monitor and the attendance at each class.
- b. Paper registers are kept in each class and the information transferred into the College's information management system
- c. The Tutor of each lesson puts in appropriate codes against the name of each student on the register.
- d. Students arriving after the start of the lesson but within the first 10 minutes of the class are marked as 'Late'.
- e. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late may join the class at the discretion of the Tutor.

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- f. The register is collected from each class and any authorised absences will be incorporated. The Attendance Officer then updates the Attendance Database. Attendance is regularly reviewed by the Safeguarding Team and SLT.

Conditions that will lead to Reporting Students and withdrawal of their sponsorship

- If a student misses 10 consecutive Contacts Points without any communication from parents/guardians or the student, then the College is very likely to report the student to UKVI.
- If a student has a pattern of absence, which is noticeable, and they cannot provide an explanation for it – then the student will be questioned and given a severe warning. If the pattern continues, the student would be reported.
- If a student is simply not making any progress on their course, despite reasonable attendance, and does not seem to be taking the course seriously, then they could also be reported.

Procedure for Authorised Absence: If a student is unable to attend a class, he/she must do the following:

- a. In case of planned leave, fill in a Leave of Absence Application Form and submit it well in time. Leave forms are available at the College reception. An email from a parent may be accepted as an alternative to an official Leave of Absence Application, and those over 18 years of age and not on a visa may also send in email requesting leave.
- b. In case of unplanned absence, inform the Attendance Officer as soon as possible to explain the reasons. On return to College following any period of unplanned absence, complete a Return of Absence Form explaining the reasons for absence (e.g. due to illness, for a doctor's or dentist's appointment etc.).
- c. The Principal, or Head of GCSE or Sixth Form, will be responsible for the sanctioning of any leave. Records of authorised absence will be retained.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy: The Attendance Officer is responsible for ensuring continuous and effective implementation of this attendance policy. The College Senior Leadership Team (SLT) monitors the operation of this policy on a weekly basis by receiving regular reports on student attendance from the Attendance Officer. Attendance is discussed in regular meetings of the Leadership group – all instances of authorised and unauthorised absence are reviewed. The policy itself is regularly reviewed in order to make sure that it is in full compliance at all times with the relevant laws and regulations of the UKVI. The following is the procedure for monitoring the attendance policy:

- a. Once all attendance has been entered into the system on the same day, the Attendance Officer generates a Daily Attendance Record.
- b. The Attendance Officer reviews the daily report and necessary action taken. In the case of unauthorised absence, Email and SMS alerts are sent to students who have missed two expected contacts.
- c. If the student misses a number of lessons they are contacted by letter as are their parents and Guardians and warnings issued.
- d. Once a student has missed 10 expected contacts for no good reason, the UKVI is informed.
- e. The College Leadership team reviews attendance each week and discusses any student who has received a warning letter or who has been reported to UKVI.
- f. UKVI will be informed using the appropriate and prescribed systems about the following occurrences, whichever occurs first:
 - i. A student has missed 10 expected contacts – these include but are not limited to attending a lecture, a meeting with a tutor or other member of staff, submitting an assessed or non- assessed coursework, attending a test/examination etc. If a student who has already been reported to the UKVI reports back to the College with a valid reason for his absence and the College is satisfied with the response from the student to warnings and his/her efforts to improve the attendance, UKVI will be informed.
 - ii. If a student has had a significant change of circumstance.
- g. Students who have been issued a final warning and reported to the UKVI, and who have failed to provide a satisfactory explanation to the College for their missed expected contacts, may have their sponsorship withdrawn.
- h. A Register of those students reported to the UKVI is maintained by the Registrar. A log of all the communications with students is maintained for future references and follow-up by the Principal.
- i. An interview conducted with a student about attendance/absence or any warning sent to the student must be recorded in

the student file. The reasons and evidence for any authorised absences being granted will also be recorded and kept in the student's file.

- j. The College will take all possible actions in its power to track the whereabouts of any students who have continuously failed to attend or have had their places withdrawn. The College will provide all relevant information that will help the UKVI to identify and locate such students.
- k. The College will also report a student if a pattern of absence is established without valid reasons.

Appendix 3: Examples of Authorised and Unauthorised absence

Authorised absence may include absences for reasons (and evidence) such as the following:

1. Illness (other than a cold or sore throat)
2. Medical and dental treatment (usually with evidence – text message)
3. Close family wedding or bereavement of family members
4. Short-term exceptional domestic circumstances
5. Certain days of religious observance
6. Court appearances
7. Attendance at a Children's Hearing or Care Review
8. Excursions or sporting fixtures arranged by or in conjunction with the College
9. Universities official visits/ interviews or some specifically approved educational visit
10. Attendance at aptitude tests e.g. UCAT, LNAT or IELTS
11. Home Office appointments

In any such cases, the College will require *bona fide* evidence of such reasons, such as a doctor's certificate or other evidence in writing. In the case of family or religious events, corroboration should be provided by the student's parent or guardian.

Unauthorised absence may include absences for reasons such as the following:

1. Holidays taken in term-time without prior approval by the College
2. Students who claim to have a "cold" or "sore throat" or some other form of low risk endemic medical condition
3. Unsubstantiated illness
4. Visiting relatives
5. Leaving before the end of term to secure a cheap flight
6. Any unexplained absence
7. Parent's illness (depending on context and severity)
8. Going shopping, haircuts, dental appointments (without evidence), driving theory tests, bank appointments
9. Sleeping in late
10. Collecting or taking a relative to the airport
11. Extended leave following a period of approved leave for such as religious observance
12. Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation is considered unsatisfactory
13. Leaving early (the UK) in order to secure cheaper air flights or returning late to College for the same reason

Persistent absence is defined by the DfE as where a child's attendance falls below 90%. For a student of Compulsory College Age, where a child is defined with persistent absence, the College then has a duty of care to ensure that all further absences must be confirmed with medical or other relevant evidence. Unauthorised absence could also result in legal action or a fine.

Exceptional Leave: Time off will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and this leave is granted at the Principal's discretion. Any parent or guardian who requires exceptional leave for their child/ward must request this in writing from the Principal and at least one week's advance notice should be given (where possible).

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In working together to improve attendance, our ambition is to successfully treat the root causes of absence and remove barriers to attendance, at home, in College. We work in partnership with the local authorities and collaboratively with, not against families. Our target is always as follows:

- We expect David Game College to aspire to high standards of attendance for all students and parents, with a culture where all can and want to be in College and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the College.
- We rigorously monitor our attendance data to identify any patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so the College, parents and local authorities can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
- We listen and understand and when a pattern is spotted, discuss with students and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
- We formalise our support where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with. DGC works to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.
- Where all other avenues have been exhausted and DGC support is not working or not being engaged with, enforced attendance through statutory intervention to protect the student's right to an education may be required.

Attendance Escalation Procedure:

Student Attendance 94-96%

Actions:

- Keep monitoring
- Encourage higher attendance
- Review
- If a student is on a visa and unauthorised absences, issue either verbal or written warnings

Student Attendance 91-94%

Actions:

- Communication with student and parents
- Review and monitoring
- Discuss individual's situation and seek explanation and commitment from student for 95% +
- Direct involvement of the Head of GCSE or A level and where necessary DSLs
- If student of compulsory College age, arrange a meeting with parents and secure their ongoing support
- If student is on a visa issue further warning letters

Student Attendance below 90%

Actions:

- Attendance Action Plan
- Meet with parents and the students
- Examine the underlying causes and patterns
- Explore broader safeguarding issues
- Engage with LA
- If student is on VISA – if absences cannot be properly explained or justified, and/or a pattern emerges, withdraw sponsorship and report the student to UKVI, however, each student's circumstances and context will have to be individually reviewed before a decision is made.
- If a home student, who persists in unauthorised chronic absence and who is unlikely to complete their course of study, student should be temporarily or permanently excluded, depending on context and circumstances

Links

- [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)

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- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Education Act 1996](#)
- [Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)

All students

Parents are expected to:	Colleges are expected to:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the College is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the College as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the College day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear College attendance policy on the College website which all staff, students and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole College culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their College(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole College cultures.</p> <p>Ensure College leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Ensure College staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a College Attendance Support Team that works with all Colleges in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each College with a named point of contact in the College Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all Colleges in the area to share effective practice.</p>

Students at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Colleges are expected to:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the College and local authority to help them understand their child’s barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify students at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified student and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-College barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of College barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the College is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the College, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help College leaders focus support on the students who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a termly conversation with every College to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for students who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of College barriers, provide each identified student and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the College and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the College and partners.</p>

Persistently absent students

Parents are expected to:	Colleges are expected to:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the College and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for students at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other Colleges in the local area, such as Colleges previously attended and the Colleges of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help College leaders focus support on the students who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for students at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the College to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the College, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent students

Parents are expected to:	Colleges are expected to:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the College and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent students and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent students with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help College leaders focus support on the students who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent students and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the College, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

Support for cohorts of students with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Colleges are expected to:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other Colleges in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help College leaders focus support on the students who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous Colleges.

Support for students with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Colleges are expected to:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the College and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with students and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the student's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help College leaders focus support on the students who need it.	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example, special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory College age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

Support for students with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Colleges are expected to:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the College and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Inform the student's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help College leaders focus support on the students who need it.</p>	<p>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting students previously looked after.</p>

Monitoring

Parents:	Colleges:	Attendance Officer and Governance Advisory Committee :	Local authorities:
<p>Colleges regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p>	<p>Ofsted considers Colleges' efforts to improve or sustain high attendance as part of inspections. Multi-academy trusts regularly review attendance data and support Colleges.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision-making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p>	<p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p>