SIR WILLIAM PERKINS'S SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Policy Statement

For the welfare, health and safety and educational benefit of all students, Sir William Perkins's School registers students in all years, including the Sixth Form. Sir William Perkins's School requires regular attendance and the presence of students is checked twice daily at the start of morning lessons and in the afternoon. This attendance register is a legal document subject to the *Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.* For this reason, Form Tutors/other staff must ensure they are completed properly in accordance with the procedures in this document.

This Policy applies to all members of our School community, including those in the Sixth Form. It is thus relevant to all day students of compulsory school age (5-16) as well as to students younger and older than this. (N.B. Our Sixth Form students are of compulsory 'participatory age' as opposed to compulsory *school* age.)

Registers are completed electronically via SIMS. In effect they are completed in ink because the registers can be printed out. The electronic attendance register is backed up at least once a month and is retained for three years after the school year in question.

Student absences are followed up promptly on the day of absence and parents/carers are required to notify absences in accordance with the procedures set out below.

Sir William Perkins's School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document. This policy and procedures is informed by the following guidance:
- [Children Missing Education](#) (DfE, 2016 – updated August 2024)
- [Working together to improve school attendance 2024](#)

This document is available to all interested parties on the School's website and on request from the School Office. It should be read in conjunction with:

- Admissions Policy
- Missing Student Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The School is fully committed to ensuring that the implementation of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

2. The Importance of Good Attendance

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. Good attendance is essential for students to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

Some students find it harder than others to attend school and therefore the school will work in partnership with students and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources.

3. Key Personnel and Responsibilities

3.1. All members of <u>teaching staff</u> must be familiar with the following procedures and must know how to access and complete the attendance registers in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

3.2. The <u>Attendance Administrator</u> (or another representative from the School Office) is responsible for the initial following up of unexplained absences.

3.3. <u>Form Tutors and Heads of Year</u> are responsible for monitoring attendance and following up on unexplained absences and/or poor patterns of attendance.

3.4. <u>The Deputy Head Pastorl</u> fulfils the role of 'School Attendance Champion' and oversees all matters relating to attendance and promoting a culture of good attendance across the school.

3.5. <u>The Pastoral Team</u> together with the Personalised Learning Department will collaborate with and support parents and students who are struggling to maintain good attendance.

3.6. <u>The Governors will have oversight and responsibility for ensuring that good attendance is promoted</u> across the school and that school leaders fulfil expectation and their statutory duties in relation to attendance.

4. Completion of the registers

Students and form staff should be in their form rooms at 8.20am for morning registration (AMR).   Afternoon registration takes place at 3.25pm. All students will be marked as present '**/**' or absent 'N' when using electronic registration. The registers will close at 08.45 and 15.40 after which time a student arriving late will be marked as an unauthorised absence for that session, in accordance with the rules set out in Working Together to Support School Attendance 2024.

4.1. Key Information for Students:

4.1.1. Any student arriving after 8.40 am must sign in at Reception and provide reasons for lateness.

4.1.2. Any student who has permission to leave School for a medical or similar appointment, must always sign out at Reception and sign back in at Reception.

4.1.3.   No student is allowed to absent themselves from a lesson without permission from the subject teacher or appropriate member of the pastoral team or Senior Leadership team.

> ***Note:***
> - If a student feels unwell, or is involved in an accident, they must tell a teacher who will make arrangements for them to go to the First Aid Room.
> - Students who are not in a lesson, may take themselves to the First Aid Room.
> - No student must ever make their own arrangements to go home during the school day. If necessary, the School Office will make arrangements for the student to be collected if they are too unwell to stay in school.

4.2.   **Key Information for Staff:**

4.2.1.   All staff registering students during AMR and PMR must complete the relevant form register using Lesson Monitor in SIMS [see Appendix A].

4.2.2.   All teachers should complete a class register at the start of lessons using Lesson Monitor in SIMS.   It is a professional requirement to use 'register codes' to keep track of each student throughout the day and this enables the Attendance Administrator to update registers and keep track of daily attendance.

4.2.3.   Unexplained absences are followed up and monitored according to the process set out below [Section 9].

5. Signing Out when leaving the School site during the day

5.1.   Students should sign out in Reception if they need to leave the school premises for treatments or appointments. Such absences must be explained by the parent/carer and the register updated to explain the absence. If such absences are not notified in advance, the Attendance Administrator will mark the register as '**N'** and update it with the appropriate symbol once the nature of the absence has been confirmed (no later than 5 days after the entry). Where it has been impossible to ascertain the reason for non attendance, the 'N' code will be changed to an unauthorised absence **'O'** in accordance with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024*.

5.2.   If the First Aid Room team has contacted the parent/carer to pick up a sick student, the Attendance Administrator will mark them with '**I'** for that day. Parents/carers are required to follow standard procedures for notifying the school of and subsequent absences relating to this illness.

6. Signing Out arrangements for Sixth Form

6.1.   Sixth form students must seek authorisation from their Head of Year or the Director of Sixth Form, for any absence during the school day, including illness, unless they have been rewarded with a 'Freedom Pass'. Students without a Freedom Pass will be issued with a **blue exeat slip**, by an appropriate member of staff, which they need to hand in to the Receptionist. All Sixth form students must sign out at Reception, before leaving the School premises. Students also needs to sign in at Reception on their return to School.

6.2.   If a student does not sign **in** or **out** as required this will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter by the Director of Sixth Form.

6.3.   Sixth form student absences will be authorised at the discretion of the Head of Year or the Director of Sixth Form.

7. **Peripatetic Music and Speech and Drama Lessons**

7.1.   Peripatetic teachers will give the schedule of lessons to the Attendance Administrator via email using the office@swps.org.uk in a timely manner where lessons will be marked on student's attendance with a '**&'**. If a student fails to attend the music lesson, the peripatetic teacher will check if the student is absent from school by asking Reception. Reception will notify the pastoral team immediately (via the pastoral@swps.org.uk email) if the student is not in their lesson but has registered in school that day.

7.2.   Any student missing morning registration due to a Music lesson must sign in before the lesson at reception. The Attendance Administrator will add the symbol '&' against the student's name on the register.

7.3.   If a student is not marked in this way and is missing from the lesson, teachers should send an email to pastoral@swps.org.uk immediately.

7.4.   Students should inform subject teachers personally if they have a planned music or Speech and Drama lesson which will mean that they will miss a subject lesson. In addition, if there is an anticipated absence from a Music or Speech and Drama lesson – eg for a School trip, students should give advance notice of this arrangement to their Music or Speech and Drama teacher.

8. **Attendance monitoring during the exam period for examination groups**

8.1.   In most cases the Year 11 students and Year 13 students will be marked as being on 'study leave' when the exam period commences.

8.2.   Some Year 12 students may also be sitting public exams during the same period and will not be marked as being on study leave. In these cases, the Exams Officer will contact the Attendance Administrator in the School Office so that SIMS can be updated accordingly.

8.3.   **Note:**   Year 12 students sitting a public exam are allowed study leave for the session immediately prior to their exam, and hence will be marked as being on 'study leave' for that period.   (They should, however, not take a full day as study leave. If this happens, half the day will be deemed as being unauthorised absence, while the other half will be authorised study leave.)

9. **Holidays and other personal absence during term time**

9.1.   The School requests that family holidays are not arranged during term time. If this is unavoidable, requests for authorised absences should be made **in writing to the Head** well in advance of the date.

9.2.   Other absence for personal reasons is sometimes unavoidable. In these circumstances, parents/carers should write to the Head requesting leave of absence in advance of the date, using the email address absence@swps.org.uk.

10. **Following up Unexplained Absences and Monitoring Attendance**

10.1.   Parents/carers are required to contact the School before 8:15 am to advise of absence or illness by phone or email.

10.2.   Any unexplained absences are followed up by the Attendance Administrator as soon as possible on the day via text and/or telephone calls to all emergency contact held and the attendance records updated. In the event that a parent/carer does not respond to the text, a telephone call(s) will be made to confirm the student's whereabouts

10.3.   Any students designated as vulnerable are followed up as a priority and for any student with a Child Protection Plan, the Inclusion Team (Surrey County Council) will be notified within 48 hours.

10.4.   If the school is unable to make contact, unless it is inappropriate to do so, the student's friends may be asked whether they have heard from the student and, if so, they should ask their friend to make contact with the School.

10.5.   The Deputy Head Pastoral or the Head may also be involved in following up absences, particularly where there is a pattern of poor attendance or where the school has particular concern for the safety of a student.

10.6.   Should a student be missing from School without authorisation or explanation and there has been no contact with parents/carers or the student, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head will be informed and a decision taken about how to proceed.

10.7.   Heads of Year receive regular reports of student attendance 'to date'. Student punctuality data and attendance percentages and days missed are tracked throughout the year and actions taken to support families are initiated promptly in consultation with the Deputy Head Pastoral.

10.8.   A referral may be made to the Inclusion Team (Surrey County Council) if a student's attendance falls below 90% and all attempts to work with the parents/carers to improve attendance have failed.

10.9.   The School will also report the following attendance issues to the Inclusion Team at Surrey County Council:
- Non-return within 10 school days after authorised absence of 10 school days or more
- Failure to attend regularly (students likely to miss 15 school days with illness and are deemed as 'persistently absent' and students whose attendance falls below 50% and are deemed as having 'severe absence' in accordance with Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024.

10.10. Notification of deletion from the School's Admissions Register will be done in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, and the process is set out in our Admissions Policy.

10.11. Support will be offered by the pastoral team to any family who are finding it hard to get their child to attend school. The reasons for non-attendance will be explored with the family and any barriers to attendance will be discussed and where possible ameliorated in consultation with the Personalised Learning Department, Wellbeing team and Academic Heads of Department. Students with severe absence (below 50%) will be supported with an action plan that may involve Early Help support, a temporary part time timetable and/or homework hiatus or targeted support with friendships or SEMH issues by the Personalised Learning Department.

11. Maintenance of the Attendance Register

11.1.   The attendance register records the following information:
- Original and amended entries;
- Name or title of any person making an amendment and the date the amendment is made.

11.2.   The SIMS manager is responsible for creating an additional back up of the Attendance Register at least once a month and this is retained for three years after the school year in question.

12. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body is ultimately responsible for the effective oversight, review and amendment of this policy and understands its legal obligation to do so.

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually by the Deputy Head Pastoral or as events or legislation requires.

Next scheduled review date: Sept 25 *Last reviewed: May 25*	
Key updates in the previous version:	- Addition of paragraph about the importance of good attendance - Addition of Deputy Head Pastoral as 'Attendance Champion' in accordance with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* - Amendments to rules in accordance with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, for example about when referrals to Surrey inclusion team will occur - How to complete a register moved to new Appendix A - Clarification about when the register closes and a student who is late is now under code U - Inclusion of paragraph about how the school will support a student who is struggling to attend school - Addition of definitions of persistent absence and severe absence in line with Working Together to Improve School Attendance - Addition of Governor responsibilities with regards to oversight of attendance

Appendix A:

Process of registration

Open SIMS and select the appropriate group shown on the teacher's personal timetable. This will include allocated 'Cover' lessons.

Take the register using the symbols for present '**/**' or absent '**N**'. If a student arrives late the '**N**' should be changed to '**L**' and the number of minutes late entered.

If a member of staff other than the form tutor is registering during AMR or PMR, the register can be accessed by using 'Edit Marks' in SIMS [*Focus/Lesson Monitor/Edit Marks*]. Choose the appropriate registration group and take the register as in 3.3.2.

The attendance register includes the student's tutor group and records if they are absent or present at any given registration session. The codes used in registers are listed below with their meanings:

If you require help with using SIMS to register, please contact sims@swps.org.uk