ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Blundell's
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Blundell's
FOUNDED 1604

ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Policy Name:	Attendance Policy & Procedures
Applicable to:	Preparatory and Senior School
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POLICY AMENDMENTS

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1st July 2024	Format Updated
31st October 2024	Policy fully reviewed and updated in line with DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024 guidance.
1st September 2025	Annual Update
1st September 2026	Policy fully reviewed in line with ISBA annual guidance.

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ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

KEY SCHOOL CONTACTS

1. **Senior School Attendance Champion**: Mr Andrew Berrow (Deputy Head Operations)
2. **Prep School Attendance Champion (including EYFS)**: Mr Andy Southgate (Head)
3. Additional Key Staff Contacts:
    a. Nicky Klinkenberg (Senior School Designated Safeguarding Lead)
    b. Simon Howkins (Preparatory School Designated Safeguarding Lead)

AIMS

4. This is the attendance policy of Blundell's School.
5. The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.
6. The aims of this policy are as follows:
    a. to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
    b. to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
    c. to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence in order to prevent children becoming children missing education (CME), and set out the School's approach to the management of absence and non-attendance;
    d. to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
    e. to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

7. This policy applies to the whole School, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
8. This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

9. This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
    a. Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
    b. National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Boarding Schools (Department for Education (DfE), May 2026);

c. EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (DfE, September 2025);

d. Education and Skills Act 2008;

e. Children Act 1989;

f. Childcare Act 2006;

g. Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, May 2025);

h. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

i. Equality Act 2010; and

j. Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (together referred to as data protection laws);

10. This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

a. Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, July 2026);

b. Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, August 2024);

c. Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, August 2024);

d. Communicating with parents about school attendance (DfE, June 2026);

e. Guidance for Parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);

f. 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);

g. Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2026);

h. Children missing education (DfE, August 2024);

i. Summary table of responsibilities for children missing education (DfE, September 2025);

j. Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);

k. Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);

l. Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);

m. Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);

n. Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);

o. Providing Remote education: guidance for schools (DfE, updated August 2024); and

p. SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE & Department of Health, updated 12 September 2024).

11. The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

a. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;

b. Missing Pupil Policy and procedures;

c. Risk Management Policy;

d. Disability Policy;

e. Remote Education Plan;

f. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) policy;

g. Behaviour and Discipline policy;

h. School Rules; and

i. Parent Contract.

PUBLICATION AND AVAILABILITY

12. This policy is published on the School website.

13. This policy will be sent to Parents when pupils join the School and Parents will be reminded of it at the beginning of the school year and when the policy is updated.

14. This policy is available in soft or hard copy on request at any time.

15. A copy of the policy is available for inspection during the School day and can be made available in large print or another accessible format if required.

DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

16. Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

    a. references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.

    b. references to a **Parent** means:

        i. all natural parents, whether they are married or not;

        ii. any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and

        iii. any person who has day-to-day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

    c. References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school except a person who is 19 or over for whom further education is being provided, or a person for whom part-time education suitable for people over compulsory school age is being provided.

    d. References to children missing education (CME) mean children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. A pupil who remains registered at the School is not CME solely because they are persistently or severely absent.

    e. **SAC** means the School's attendance champion.

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT AND ALLOCATION OF TASKS

17. The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

18. The Board of Governors recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the SAC.To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Board of Governors has allocated the following tasks:

Preparatory School

Task	**Allocated to**	**When / frequency of review**
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Analysing attendance and absence data	SAC	Weekly: SAC and DSL Bi-Weekly: SAC and DSL Half-Termly: SAC and DSL
Incorporating input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents).	SAC	As required
Formal annual review	Governors	Annually

Senior School

Task	**Allocated to**	**When / frequency of review**
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Analysing attendance and absence data	SAC	Weekly: HSP and SAC Bi-Weekly: HSP and SCA Half-Termly: SAC and DHP
Incorporating input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents).	SAC	As required
Formal annual review	Governors	Annually

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ATTENDANCE

19. The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

    a. the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;

    b. the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;

    c. the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and Parents;

    d. that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and

    e. children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

20. The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.

21. The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and Parents.

22. The School will communicate attendance expectations clearly at the start of each academic year, provide information and resources to support attendance, contact Parents promptly where concerns arise, seek to understand and address barriers before they become entrenched, and keep attendance information under regular review.

23. The School will communicate with Parents and carers about attendance in a supportive, respectful and non-judgmental manner. Communications will be timely, clear and accessible, explain why attendance matters for educational progress, wellbeing and safeguarding, take account of individual circumstances and known barriers, and focus on constructive dialogue, support and solutions wherever possible.

24. Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.

25. The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions (Parent Contract). It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

26. The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of

non-attendance, pupils at risk of becoming CME, and those who are persistently absent. It will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The SAC

27. The Board of Governors has appointed a senior member of staff of the School's leadership team as SAC to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. Details of the individual appointed are at the front of this policy and are widely publicised within School.

28. The SAC's responsibilities are:

    a. to set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;

    b. to establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;

    c. to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;

    d. to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and

    e. to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and Parents.

Staff with Specific Responsibilities for Attendance

29. The members of staff identified in Appendices 1 and 2 of this policy have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

    a. have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;

    b. record all absences promptly and accurately using the processes specified;

    c. seek explanations of absences;

    d. make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;

    e. look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns;

    f. deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;

    g. consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; (Senior School only)

    h. discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and Parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

All Staff

30. The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and Parents about it.

31. The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

32. The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. These registers must be kept electronically. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the School's arrangements can be found in Appendices 1 to 4.

MONITORING ATTENDANCE

33. The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:

    a. monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;

    b. using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);

    c. undertaking frequent individual level analysis to identify pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeting actions for those cases;

    d. conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;

    e. benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;

    f. devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;

    g. monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and

    h. providing data and reports to the Board of Governors.

PUPIL RESPONSIBILITIES

34. School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

35. Pupils should be aware that:

    a. they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;

    b. they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;

    c. they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;

d. they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;

e. any unexplained absence will be followed up;

f. persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:

i. offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;

ii. communication with Parents;

iii. reporting to external agencies; and

iv. sanctions against them or their Parents in line with the School's Behaviour Policies.

g. If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to the staff identified in Appendix 1 in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

ADDITIONAL NEEDS

36. The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

37. The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

38. It will also work with Parents , and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.

39. Where a pupil has an education, health and care plan the School will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

40. Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

41. Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with Parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

42. The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days

PARENT / CARER RESPONSIBILITIES

43. 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. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

44. This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the School.

45. The School will help Parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.

46. Expectations the School places on Parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy.

47. Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

STAFF TRAINING

48. The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:

    a. the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and

    b. the School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

    c. Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. This should include:

    d. the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;

    e. the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;

    f. the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and

    g. any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

    h. The School maintains written records of all staff training.

INFORMATION SHARING

49. Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

50. The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

51. Where appropriate, the school may attend targeting support meetings.

52. Where enquiries following a pupil's absence lead the School reasonably to believe that the pupil will not return and no alternative educational provision has been confirmed by the Parent, the School will refer the pupil without delay to the CME team of the pupil's home local authority.

53. The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

    a. New pupil and deletion returns;

    b. Attendance returns;

    c. Sickness returns.

54. The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

55. The School will provide register information where legally required. As an independent school, it is not required to submit daily pupil attendance data to the Department for Education. The School uses its electronic management information systems to monitor pupil-level attendance and understand attendance patterns. The Senior School uses Live Register and a bespoke application, and the Prep School uses iSAMS.

56. Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

57. All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

58. The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

APPENDIX ONE | PREPARATORY SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

MANAGING ATTENDANCE

1. The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law and set out in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.

2. The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 8.30am to close at either 3.40pm or 4.30pm, but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS / CARERS

3. The School expects all Parents to:

    a. make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;

    b. notify the School in writing if their child will cease to attend after a specified date and provide details of how the child will continue to receive suitable education;

    c. notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and

    d. cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

    e. Ensure their child attends School by 8.30am for morning registration.

REGISTRATION AND ATTENDANCE CHECKS

4. Morning registration is at 8.30am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes after the start of morning registration.

5. Afternoon registration will be at either 1.20pm (Pre-Prep) or 1.35pm (Prep), according to the published timetable. Registers will be taken consistently at the published time for all registered pupils in the relevant session. The afternoon registration window opens at 1.20pm and closes at 1.50pm.

6. Once the morning and afternoon registers close, a pupil will be recorded as absent if not present in the classroom/lesson.

7. If a pupil is absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed they may be recorded as a late arrival (code L).

8. If a pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session without a satisfactory explanation e.g. because of an unavoidable cause, then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (code U) and the reasons given/not given will be recorded.

9. The School uses iSAMS as the E-Registration and Attendance Management System.

10. Absence of Nursery pupils, who are of a non-compulsory school age, is recorded with Code X.

REPORTING ABSENCE

11. If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the following below by email / telephone by 8.30am on the first morning of absence;

12. Parents and carers should report Prep School absence to the Prep School Office by email at prephm@blundells.org or by telephone using the published School contact number.

13. Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness

14. Where illness is cited, the School may refer Parents to current NHS guidance on whether a child is well enough to attend. The School will not routinely request medical evidence for short-term illness. Reasonable evidence may be requested where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, where absence is prolonged or repeated, or where evidence will help the School understand need, make reasonable adjustments or plan support.

15. The parent/carer must update the school on any subsequent and ongoing absence, until the pupil returns to school.

16. Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 4.

MANAGING ABSENCE

17. Unexpected and unexplained absences are followed up initially by an email to parents or carers.

18. If there is no response or an inadequate explanation is provided for the absence, a member of the SLT will call parents/carers.

19. If Parents or carers cannot be contacted, the School will contact the pupil's alternative emergency contacts. For a child in the EYFS who is absent without notification or for a prolonged period, the School will consider the child's vulnerability, the vulnerability of the Parents or carers and the child's home circumstances when determining the response.

20. Any welfare or safeguarding concern arising from absence will be addressed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Missing Pupil Policy. This may include referral to local children's social care and requesting a police welfare check where necessary.

21. Where attendance concerns emerge, the School will work proactively with the pupil and family to listen to and understand barriers. Support will be tailored to individual circumstances and may include pastoral or safeguarding support, SEND support, reasonable adjustments, an attendance support plan and work with external agencies.

22. The School will regularly review data to identify emerging patterns and pupils who are persistently absent, meaning they have missed 10% or more of possible sessions, or severely absent, meaning they have missed 50% or more. These thresholds are monitoring and support triggers and do not define "regular attendance" for legal purposes.

23. Particular attention will be given to pupils whose attendance is declining or who face additional barriers, including pupils with SEND, disability, medical or mental health needs, pupils with a social worker and young carers.

24. Where appropriate, the School may agree reasonable adjustments, a time-limited phased return or a temporary part-time timetable as part of a documented plan to support reintegration into full-time education. The arrangement will be regularly reviewed and will not be used to manage behaviour.

AUTHORISED ABSENCES

25. Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

APPLICATIONS FOR AN AUTHORISED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

26. Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Head at prephm@blundells.org.

27. The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.

28. Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Head.

29. Ideally, dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the school day except in cases of emergency when the School Office should be informed.

30. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. See Appendix 4 for more details.

31. A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance

REPORTING DUTIES

32. The School is legally required to share specified register information with the local authority. This includes new pupil and deletion returns at non-standard transition points; attendance returns containing the names and addresses of compulsory-school-age pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have been absent continuously for ten school days with one or more of codes G, N, O or U; and sickness returns for pupils recorded with code I whom the School has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Attendance returns will be made at the frequency agreed with the local authority and no less frequently than once per calendar month.

33. Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing Child Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

APPENDIX TWO | SENIOR SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

MANAGING ATTENDANCE

1. The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law and set out in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.

2. The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 8.20am to either 4pm (Wednesdays and Saturdays) or 5pm (Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays) but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS / CARERS

3. The School expects all Parents to:

    a. make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;

    b. notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and

    c. cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

    d. Parents of day pupils should ensure their child attends School by 8.20am for morning registration;

    e. Parents of boarding pupils should ensure their child returns to their boarding accommodation by 8.20am on Monday morning. They may return on Sunday by arrangement with the relevant houseparent.

REGISTRATION AND ATTENDANCE CHECKS

4. Morning registration is by thumbprint using the house terminals. The terminals will be open from 7-9am on school days. This is the same time for all registered pupils. After 9am the system will record the pupil as being late. Pupils will also record whether they are leaving at the end of the school day, after prep or staying the night.

5. Afternoon registration will be from 12pm to 2pm using the terminals in the dining hall and in Westlake. After 2pm pupils will be recorded as being late.

6. Once the morning and afternoon registers close, a pupil will be recorded as absent if not present in the lesson/games.

7. If a pupil is absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed they will be recorded as a late arrival (code L).

8. If a pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session without a satisfactory explanation e.g. because of an unavoidable cause, then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (code U) and the reasons given/not given will be recorded.

9. Registers will also be called at the beginning of each lesson in order to identify and follow-up on absences from lessons that might occur after morning or afternoon registration.

10. The School uses LiveRegister for am/pm registrations and iSAMS for classroom registration. SOCs is used for attendance at games and activities.

11. LiveRegister will generate a list of those boarding overnight. This is used for roll calls in the houses in the evening, once before prep and again before bed.

REPORTING ABSENCE

12. Requests for absence (e.g. medical or dental appointments or university visits etc) should be made to the houseparent at least three days in advance. Requests for absence which are not for educational or medical reasons should be made to the Head.

13. Please note that term dates are published a year in advance and that it is the governors' policy not to allow holidays to be taken in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

14. If a pupil is to be absent from School for an emergency or through illness the parent / carer should contact the pupil's houseparent or matron by email / telephone by 8:30 am on first morning of absence.

15. Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.

16. Parents should inform the school each day that their child is ill unless the period of time is predictable (e.g. recuperation after an operation) in which case the time period should be notified in the initial contact with the school.

17. Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register, in accordance with Appendix 4.

MANAGING ABSENCE

18. If a pupil has not arrived at school by 9am, the house matron will contact the parents to establish the pupil's whereabouts. This process will be completed by 10:30am. LiveRegister will then be updated accordingly with the reason for the absence.

19. Houseparents will monitor absence from school daily and lesson absences on a weekly basis and take appropriate action.

20. Missing lessons will result in a sanction from the houseparent.

21. Missing school without parental or school consent would be considered a Serious Offence and dealt with by the Second Master.

22. Where a pupil is absent for medical reasons for more than 15 days, the local authority will be informed.

23. The attendance register will be formally reviewed half-termly by the Deputy Head, Pastoral, the DSL and the houseparent to identify any causes for concern.

AUTHORISED ABSENCES

24. Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

APPLICATIONS FOR AN AUTHORISED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

25. Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to Head@blundells.org.

26. The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.

27. Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Head. These are unlikely to be granted for holidays in term time.

28. Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the school day except in cases of emergency when the relevant houseparent should be informed.

29. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence.

30. A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance

REPORTING DUTIES

31. The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attendance their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.

32. In the event that a pupil holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the School under the Points Based System goes missing, the School will report to UKVI if the pupil misses ten consecutive expected contact points. These are defined as registrations.

33. Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.

34. The report will be made by the School's Level 1 user via the Sponsor Management and in accordance with prevailing UKVI guidance.

35. Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing Child Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

APPENDIX THREE | ADMISSION REGISTER

INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:

    a. maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and

    b. inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.

2. The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

3. The school must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.

4. The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers and details of the school they last attended and, in the case of the Senior School, whether each pupil of compulsory school age is a boarder or day pupil.

5. A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.

6. Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:

    a. the full name of the pupil;

    b. the address of the pupil;

    c. the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;

    d. at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;

    e. the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;

    f. name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;

    g. the ground under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

APPENDIX FOUR | ATTENDANCE REGISTER

INTRODUCTION

1. The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) including boarders in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024.

2. The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.

3. The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

4. The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

5. The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

6. On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:

    a. physically present in school during the registration period;

    a. absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or

    b. attending a place other than the school; or

    c. absent.

7. The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

    a. Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;

    b. For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;

    c. Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;

    d. Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;

    e. Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

RECORDING ABSENCE

8. Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

    a. leaves of absence;

    b. other authorised reasons;

    c. unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;

    d. unauthorised absence.

REMOTE EDUCATION

9. The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.

10. The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.

11. In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils, the School will always work with pupils and parents to ensure that any pupils who are unable to attend school are catered for on an individual basis to ensure they continue to make as much progress as possible.

12. Remote education will be considered only as a last resort after reasonable adjustments and other support have been explored, and normally as part of a time-limited plan for reintegration into in-person education. Where the pupil has an EHC plan or a social worker, the relevant local authority will be involved as appropriate.

13. This may include consideration of:

    a. ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, Parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional;

    b. if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity; and

    c. setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.

14. Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.

15. The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

16. Where code K or B is used, the nature of the provision or activity will also be recorded. Code N will not remain on the register indefinitely and will be replaced by code O if the reason for absence has not been established within five school days. Code Y7 includes absence due to non-payment of fees where applicable.

17. The School will use the national codes prescribed by regulation 10. The principal codes are: / and \ present; L late before the register closes; K local-authority-arranged provision; V educational visit; P sporting activity; W work experience; B other approved educational activity; C1 regulated performance or employment abroad; M medical or dental appointment; J1 interview; S study leave for a public examination; X non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend; C2 compulsory-school-age pupil on a part-time timetable; D dual registered; C exceptional leave; T travelling for occupational purposes; R religious observance; I illness; E suspended or permanently excluded; Q lack of access arrangements; Y1 to Y7 unable to attend because of an unavoidable cause; G unauthorised holiday; N reason not yet established; O absent in other or unknown circumstances; U arrival after the register closes; Z prospective pupil not yet on the register; and # planned whole-school closure.

National attendance and absence codes

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

18. The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

    a. holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the [•Head/member of staff authorised to grant permission];

    b. the reason for absence has not been provided;

    c. a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;

    d. a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

END