Sancton Wood School
For Early Years please see separate Attendance and Absence Policy.

Date: September 2025
Last reviewed on: September 2025
Next review due by: August 2026

Contents

1. Aims

This policy sets out our commitment to promoting good attendance across Sancton Wood School. It reflects statutory guidance and emphasises the importance of punctuality, consistency and early intervention.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/madeIt also refers to:
- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring, oversight and ensuring compliance with attendance law.

3.2 The principal

The principal implements this policy, reports to governors and supports staff with attendance monitoring.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The Vice Principal (Pastoral) leads on attendance, oversees data and ensures consistent processes are in place.

3.4 The attendance officer

The attendance officer supports daily monitoring, liaises with parents and external agencies where required.

3.5 Class teachers/Form teachers

Teachers record attendance accurately and raise concerns with the office promptly.

3.6 School staff (Admin/office)

The admin team log calls from parents, update systems and escalate concerns as necessary.

3.7 Parents

Parents must ensure regular and punctual attendance and communicate promptly about absences.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend daily and on time, taking responsibility for punctuality.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

The register is taken electronically twice daily and retained for six years. The school day in the **Senior School** starts at 8:30am and ends at 4:00pm Monday – Thursday and 3:30pm on Fridays

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:30am and will be kept open until 8:40am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm and will be kept open until 1:05pm

The school day in the **Prep School** starts at 8:30am and ends at 3:40pm EYFS/KS1 Monday –Thursday and 3.50pm KS2.

On Friday school ends at 3.20pm for EYFS/SK1 and 3.30pm for KS2

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:30am on each school day.

Codes are used in line with DfE guidance (see Appendix 1).

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school by 9.00am on the first day of absence. Absences without explanation may be recorded as unauthorised.

4.3 Planned absence

Parents must request planned absences in advance. Only exceptional circumstances will be authorised.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Late arrivals are recorded separately; persistent lateness will be followed up with parents.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

The school will call parents on the first day of any unexplained absence. If contact cannot be made, emergency contacts will be called. Safeguarding procedures apply.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance information is shared with parents termly and through annual reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

Only the principal may authorise absences in exceptional circumstances.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance awards and certificates are used to celebrate high attendance in both Prep and Senior Schools.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

The school works with families and agencies to address barriers and develop individualised plans.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Support may include phased returns, flexible timetables and SEND provision in consultation with parents.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable absence

Transition plans will be created for pupils, reviewed regularly with parents and external support where needed.

8. Attendance Monitoring and Sanctions

8.1 Monitoring attendance

Attendance is reviewed weekly, benchmarked against school and national data. 95% is our threshold.

8.2 Analysing attendance

Patterns and trends are reviewed weekly to inform strategy.

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

Data is used to design targeted attendance strategies for individuals and groups, with reports provided to governors.

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

If a pupil's attendance falls below 93%, this triggers further checks.

The following steps apply:

1. Email sent outlining concerns and expectations.
2. Contact – phone call to parents by the form teacher.
3. Written follow-up – email outlining concerns and expectations after meeting.
4. Final meeting – parents meet with senior staff to agree on next steps.

If attendance does not improve, this may be considered a breach of the admissions agreement and could result in the withdrawal of a school place.

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The school follows the DfE national attendance codes (present, authorised absence, unauthorised absence, approved educational activity).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
	Attending a place other than the school	
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
	Absent – leave of absence	
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination