

FREMAN COLLEGE

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

POLICY

Freman College aims to maximise student attendance and punctuality in order to ensure that all students are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

We expect students to have attendance of at least 95%.

Statutory Framework

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, a student is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered student.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

Rights and Responsibilities

Improving attendance and punctuality at Freman College is the responsibility of everyone in the college community - students, parents and staff.

Students

All students are expected to attend college and all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Students who do experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support. Students with attendance of 90% or below are deemed by the government to be persistently absent.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends college regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a student is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, the college is to be notified as soon as possible - by phone call or in writing. A student's absence from college must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent. The following reasons will not be authorised: looking after the house; looking after brothers and sisters or sick parents; shopping during college hours; birthdays; day trips. Parents will be promptly informed of any concerns which may arise over a student's attendance. Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during college hours.

A leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance. The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Hertfordshire Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently. Detailed procedures are attached.

Procedures may be changed by the college as appropriate.

PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION, ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Heads of House and tutors are responsible for promoting good attendance and punctuality. Heads of House monitor attendance and lateness and ensure that appropriate action is taken, including the involvement of the Attendance Improvement Officer, when necessary.

STUDENTS IN A-E YEAR

REGISTERS

Attendance registers are legal documents which may be used as evidence in court. They are also the record from which attendance figures are compiled and submitted to the DFE daily for publication. They must be up-to-date and accurate in every detail. The completion of registers is a responsibility of the teaching staff and **should on no account be delegated to students.**

Registration procedures

Registers should be opened at 8.40am. and 2:05pm and closed and saved at 8.45am. and 2:10pm respectively.

Any student arriving after 8.45 am and 2:10pm, but before the end of the registration session, will have been marked absent, but can now be marked as late. If a student arrives in college and is not registered by their tutor then they should immediately sign in their House Late Book.

All students are required to be in the registration room for registration at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions unless they are Sixth Form students who have been granted Study Leave by the Head of Sixth Form. It is the responsibility of tutors to ensure that this happens.

Any student who is not present in the registration room should be marked as absent: do not accept hearsay evidence that a student is present elsewhere in college.

In the event of a tutor or member of staff not being present, a list of those in attendance should be made on a piece of paper and returned to the office. Tutors should ensure that students are aware of this procedure and responsibility organised.

Removal of names from the register

The Office Manager will be responsible for deletions from the College Roll. Tutors and staff will be informed by email.

ABSENCE

How should parents inform us of absence?

Parents wishing to take their son / daughter on holiday during term time must write in advance to the Headteacher. Term time holidays are strongly discouraged and are only authorised in exceptional circumstances.

If a student is going to be absent for other reasons such as a doctor's appointment, parents should inform their tutor or admin@freman.org.uk in advance via a phone message, note or email.

In the case of unanticipated absence, parents are asked to notify the college on the day of absence either via a phone message or an email.

Absence codes

/	Present at school AM
\	Present at school PM
L	Late arrival before register is closed
K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA.
V	Attending an Educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a Sporting Activity P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity
W	Attending Work Experience
B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity
D	Dual Registered at another school
C1	Leave of absence – performance or regulated employment abroad
M	Leave of absence for Medical or dental Appointment
J1	Leave of absence for Interview
S	Leave of absence for Studying for public examination
X	Non – Compulsory School age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence – compulsory school age pupil subject to part time timetable
C	Leave of absence exceptional circumstances
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
R	Religious Observance
I	Illness (not medical appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision made
Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not been available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
G	Holiday not granted by school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

If off site education (B) has been authorised by the Headteacher, the appropriate code will be pre-entered by the College office. If a parent sends retrospective notification that a student has been absent because of a family holiday, this should be passed to the Headteacher and the relevant code will be entered by the College Office.

If a tutor is unsure which code to use in a particular instance, they should check with the Head of House or College Office.

N.B. Symbols K, B , S, Y, O and U should only be used following confirmation by the Pastoral Team

Following up unexplained absence

The tutor should ask for authorisation in the form of a phone message, note or email when a student returns after a period of absence, if authorisation has not already been received. Administrative staff will then take over responsibility for contacting and obtaining authorisation from the student's parents.

At the end of a four-week period a tutor group register will be printed for checking. This becomes the official register (and is stored in the office). A copy will also be issued to the tutor to be stored in the register folder.

Absence from a lesson

Attendance registers are to be taken at the start of every lesson on Satchel One. If a student is in College but has missed a lesson, this should be followed up by the subject teacher in the first instance, and then, if necessary, by the relevant Head of Department. Tutor and Head of House should be informed.

If a student has missed more than one lesson the Head of House will punish the student appropriately.

LATENESS

What should happen if a student is late (including Sixth Formers)

If a student has not arrived in the tutor room 8:40 am or 2:05pm, but arrives before the register has closed at 8:45 am or 1.55 pm, they will be marked late. If a student has not arrived in the tutor room by the time the register has closed at 8.55 a.m. or 2:10p.m. they will have been marked absent. This should not be amended. Any student not registered by their tutor should sign in the House Late Book or via a member of staff at the College Office.

If a student arrives late at any other stage in the day, they should go straight to the College Office and sign in the House Late Book.

In the event that a bus is late a member of Administrative / Pastoral staff will register the students.

Administrative staff will ensure that registers are updated to record the late arrival of students and will contact parents to request authorisation for any student arriving after 9.15am. or 1.55pm.

Late Detention

Students who are late for college in the morning will be placed in a college detention by senior staff on duty at the entrance of the college or by their tutor if arriving late to the tutor session. If a student is in college but late for registration, the tutor should place them in a college detention, informing the student and recording on BehaviourWatch.

Reporting of Attendance

Parents will receive a termly attendance report as part of the student's progress report. Causes for concern highlighted by these reports, including attendance falling below 95% or a pattern of absence on a particular day of the week / timetable, will be dealt with by the tutor or Head of House.

Pupils who are Persistently Absent

Persistent absence occurs when a student's attendance is at or falls below 90%. Absenteeism at this level will considerably damage a student's educational prospects and the school will work alongside parents/carers to tackle this issue.

Freman College will:

- Continue support as for students at risk of becoming persistently absent.
- Ensure additional targeted support is in place to remove any barriers, where necessary this includes working with external agents.
- Pastoral Support Staff will call parents/carers daily in the event of continued absence.
- If there is lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents/carers, being clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Where support is not working or being engaged with, work with the Local Authority on legal intervention.
- If there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Work with other local schools, such as schools previously attended or schools of siblings.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Freman College follows Hertfordshire County Council's Penalty Notice for Truancy Code of Conduct and procedures.

We expect parents/carers to work with us to address attendance problems.

- If a student has at least 15 sessions (half day= 1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term (including unauthorised holidays), the Headteacher may ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.
- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- If not paid within 21 days, the fine will increase to £160 per parent, per child, payable between the 22nd and 28th day.
- The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, a reduced rate is not available.
- The amount therefore will be £160 per parent, per child – payable within 28 days.
- There is no right of appeal by parents against a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- If the penalty is not paid the Local Authority may prosecute parents/carers for their child's irregular attendance.

SIXTH FORM ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Lower Sixth Form students are expected to attend registration at 8.40am. (and 2:05pm if they are in college), and all lessons. Absences will be authorised if:

- a good reason is provided, by telephone, before 8.30am, or
- the tutor has been informed in advance of a permissible absence such as a medical appointment or open day
- in exceptional circumstances a note is brought in after the event

Holidays in term-time are strongly discouraged by the College and may only be authorised by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances. This is relayed in the College prospectus and in Sixth Form attendance documents. Absence for work experience, community service or to attend university Open Days should be negotiated with the Head of Sixth.

From the beginning of the Lower Sixth, Sixth Form students are required to be in college during the morning session each day (from 8:40 until 1:20) although they can leave the site during break times. After 1:20, if they are able to study at home during “blank” periods they are encouraged to do so, but must still attend all subject lessons, as well as registration at 2:05pm if they are in the building. This is a privilege which may be withdrawn should the student's work become a cause for concern. They must use the sheets at the College Office to sign out and in on these occasions and also if they leave the college at break or lunchtime, and should present themselves for registration periods and lessons. Signing in should occur even if the student returns directly before registration.

Lower Sixth students who have blank periods in their timetable after lunch are encouraged to sign out and work from home to reduce number in the College.

Upper Sixth students must sign in and out of college each day, for fire regulations and as a record of your attendance. Signing out sheets are located in the Dining Area and monitored and recorded by the Administrative staff.

Upper Sixth students are encouraged to only be in College for timetabled lessons where possible.

Lateness or Absence from Lessons

Subject teachers will take a register of attendance via Satchel One, draw attention to lateness, and if necessary refer it to the Head of Department.

It is essential this record is kept as a student may be charged for their exam entry if their attendance in that subject falls below 80%.

Subject teachers should check absences via Satchel One. If a student is in College but has missed a lesson, this should be followed up by the subject teacher in the first instance, and then, if necessary, by the relevant Head of Department.

Lateness or Absence from College

Procedures are as above for A – E Year.

Reporting of Attendance

Parents can see students attendance via Satchel One either online or via the app. Parents will receive a termly attendance report as part of the student's progress report. Causes for concern highlighted by these reports will be dealt with by the Head of Sixth Form and the Pastoral Team in an appropriate manner.

Ratified; Summer 2026
Review: Summer 2027