

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



SIXTH FORM ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by:	LGC
Last reviewed on:	July 2026
Next review due by:	July 2027

Sixth Form Attendance Policy

Rationale:

At Sacred Heart Sixth Form, we believe that attending school regularly is one of the foundations of successful learning and helps to prepare students for the world of work and adult life. Our expectation, therefore, is for every student to attend school and to be punctual. Parents have an obligation to ensure that their child attends school every day and on time, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence and low attendance from school without good reason is known to directly affect students' achievement.

Aims:

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Sixth Form students need to attend school regularly by law if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Historical school data shows that attendance below 80% results in a drop of one whole grade at A-level. Attendance is always required on references for university and employment.

What does good attendance look like?

At Sacred Heart we follow a traffic light system: the purpose of colour coding helps staff, parents and students have a clear understanding of our expectations.

- **Green Zone: 95% - 100%**

We expect students to have green attendance throughout their education. Those in the green are more likely to do well in examinations, have better job opportunities and can fully engage and with personal development.

- **Amber Zone: 90% - 95%**

Students in this zone are at risk of underachieving due to the absence level. Students who miss school regularly are more likely to suffer from school related stress. If your child is in the Amber Zone, we will contact you to complete an 'Attendance Agreement' to help avoid attendance falling into the Red Zone.

- **Red Zone: Under 90%**

Students in the Red Zone are more likely to underachieve. This will have an impact on progression after Sixth Form and students will have gaps in vital career guidance and university application procedures.

Procedures:

School and lesson attendance

Stage 1

- A fortnightly attendance report is run by Heads of Year and every student's percentage attendance is colour coded.
- The Head of Year highlights causes for concern to form tutor.
- 1:1 meetings are held with form tutor to establish the reason for absence; two weeks are given to improve
- Attendance is monitored

The Stage 1 procedure can also be instigated by subject teachers where individual subject attendance falls below 95%.

Stage 2

- If no improvement in attendance is seen in the following two weeks, the relevant Head of Year meets with the student and home is contacted via telephone
- An attendance monitoring card issued to student

Stage 3

- If no improvement is seen over the half term, parents are invited in to school for a meeting with the Head of Sixth Form
- Attendance Agreement is issued

Stage 4

- If the Attendance Agreement is not been met, a meeting with the Senior Leadership Link and the Head of Sixth Form is arranged with parents
- The students place in Sixth Form will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Link and the Head of Sixth Form
- A careers interview will be arranged if appropriate

Funding regulations dictate that a student MUST be withdrawn from their course of study if they are absent from lessons 20 consecutive school days. The Education and Skills Funding Agency does not distinguish between authorized and unauthorised absence for this purpose.

The School Day

The school day starts with compulsory **tutor time** at **08:45am**.

Tutor time in Sixth Form takes the form of guided sessions where students are encouraged to reflect upon aspects of their ethos, their community, and issues in the wider world, while developing their planning, presentation, and interpersonal skills. Tutors also guide students in applications to university, apprenticeships, extra and super curricular activities and help with any study or personal needs.

Students should arrive at school each morning by **08:40am** in time for registration.

Anyone persistently failing to arrive on time may be required to stay behind after school to do extra private study, be placed on monitoring or in extreme cases receive formal fixed term exclusions.

Period	Starts	Ends
Registration	08:45am	09:05am
1	09:05am	10:05am
2	10:10am	11:10am
3	11:30am	12:30pm
4	1:20pm	2:20pm
5	2:25pm	3:25pm

Classes end at **3:25pm** every day. The Sixth Form is available for private study from 7:30am until 5:00pm.

Lunches are served in both Madeleine's and the Main School Dining Hall. Sixth Form students have an early sitting in Main School starting at 12:15pm. Madeleine's is available for lunch between 11:30am and 1:20pm, depending on period 3 lessons.

To really succeed at Advanced Level study, students need to develop effective study skills. One of these study skills is managing time effectively and making good use of private study time, both in school and at home. We provide a number of study skills workshops throughout Year 12 and Year 13 to develop on these skills.

Private Study

Any time that is not timetabled (or a period 3 lunchtime), is expected to be used for private study. This is not optional, and all students are expected to be in school to study during these periods.

Sixth Form students can use departmental work areas, the main library, the open study area, vacant classrooms in Sixth Form, computer rooms in Sixth Form and the study area for private study.

Students can get a lot of work done during the school day if they use their private study time sensibly. However, private study will inevitably extend outside school hours. You will need to establish a pattern of putting aside a regular amount of time each week for doing background reading, consolidation and learning of content covered in lessons and for completion of major assignments. **As a benchmark, each hour of taught lesson time should be supplemented with an additional hour of private study.**

Signing In and Out

It is a **legal requirement** that we know who is in the school building at all times. Students must make sure that they sign-in using our electronic system every day. Lanyards and barcoded cards will be issued to every student on their first day in Sixth Form. They must also sign out each time they leave the building throughout the day. Sanctions will be implemented if a student repeatedly fails to sign-in or out, OR if they were to sign in for another student. This is a safeguarding and fire risk issue.

Authorised Absences

Missing lessons and study time can put students at a serious disadvantage. Staff take electronic registers in all lessons and attendance is detailed on grade reports shared with parents.

All routine medical, dental and optician appointments are to be made out of school hours and certainly not during timetabled lessons. We may authorise a leave of absence for a driving test if provided with information in advance but driving lessons **SHOULD NEVER** be booked during school hours.

If attendance falls below expected standards in any individual subject, students will be placed on formal monitoring. If attendance does not improve this could lead to removal from courses, withdrawal from exams or being asked to find alternative post-16 provision.

If you are ill, a parent must inform Sixth Form by telephone on **0191 275 1932** or email enquiries@shhs.org.uk using the **subject line: Sixth Form Absence** by **09:00am**.

If students are ill in school, they should report to Mrs Stockley who will contact their Head of Year. Students are not to absent themselves under any circumstances as the School has a legal responsibility to know where they are during the school day.

Unauthorised Absences

Any absences from school without appropriate communication from either the student or a parent/carers, will result in an email or telephone contact on the morning of the absence, carried out by Sixth Form Administrator or the Head of Year.

A reply is required stating the reason for the absence to enable attendance records to be updated; if no reply is received within 24hours, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

If no reason can be established, we may ask our school Education Welfare Office to visit the student's home to carry out a welfare check and establish a reason for absence.

Please see the guide below for further clarification:

Foreseen – inform school in advance		Unforeseen
Authorised with evidence (e.g. note/phone call/email from parent)	Unauthorised – we will never agree to:	Authorised depending upon circumstances
• A medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside school hours • To look after a family member or another person for whom the student has caring responsibilities – however this does not cover babysitting. • A maximum of 5 religious’ holidays in line with the student’s faith on the appropriate festivals. • A visit to a University to attend an open day (maximum of 3 days to be approved in a year). • A career or university related interview. • An appointment with a Connexions Advisor that cannot be scheduled outside of lessons. • A work experience placement which is an integral part of a course, and for which the student does not receive a wage and agreed in advance with school. • Participating in a significant extra-curricular activity, such as drama, music, sport or volunteering. Authorised absence will be granted only where the activity reflects a significant level of personal achievement, for example, regional/ national events, or for some other one-off event. Authorised absences for this reason will be granted sparingly as long as studies do not suffer; where a pattern of frequent participation in such activities is proposed, alternative solutions may be explored with the student. • Attendance at the funeral of a close family friend or immediate family. • Severe disruption to a student’s mode of transport where there is no practical way of getting to school. • A driving test. • Visits approved by the school.	• Holiday taken during term-time. This includes festivals. • Social events during term-time. • Part or full-time work which is not part of the student’s programme of study. • Leisure activities. • Birthdays or similar celebrations. • Babysitting younger siblings. Unless in exceptional circumstance and rare occurrence. • Shopping. • Driving lessons and the driving theory test. • Late arrival to lessons/tutorials. • Routine medical/dental appointments. • Missing lessons to complete coursework / homework. • Taking unofficial exam study leave. • Immediate family e.g. cousin’s wedding. This is not an exhaustive list.	• An emergency involving a family member or another person. Sudden severe illness would be an example. However, while such cases will be treated very sympathetically on a one-off basis, they will not be acceptable as regular grounds for authorising absence. • Transport problems, where these were not known about in advance, and where there is no alternative means to hand. • Sickness Absence – letters must be provided from a parent/carers for periods up to 5 days. Longer periods must be accompanied with a medical letter from a recognised medical expert • Any emerging pattern of non-attendance due to sickness without explanation would be unacceptable.

Stage 1

Tutor/Head of Year/Attendance Officer

Tutor meeting when attendance falls below 95%



Continued poor attendance or
poor attendance to lessons

Stage 2

Head of Year/Attendance Officer

Head of Year to meet with student and phone call to parents



No improvement in attendance to
school or attendance to lessons

Stage 3

Head of Sixth Form/Head of Year

Head of Sixth Form to invite parents into school and Attendance Agreement issued



No improvement in attendance to school or
attendance to lessons seen over a half term

Stage 4

SLT/Head of Sixth Form

SLT and Head of Sixth Form to invite parents into school for Alternate Pathway Meeting