Attendance Policy

2024-2025

Reviewed by Adam Cross: 19/06/24

Approved by the MPW CSC: 5/09/24

Next Review: June 2025

1 Aims

1.1 MPW aspires to high levels of attendance from all students. Good attendance is necessary for all students to get the most out of their time in full-time education, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

1.2 The aims of this policy are as follows:
- to develop and maintain a whole college culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- to ensure, so far as possible, that every student in the college is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the college;
- to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the college, reduce absence and set out the college's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
- to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and student wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole college approach to safeguarding; and
- to help to promote a whole college culture of safety, equality and protection.

2 Introduction

2.1 The college recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the college's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good college attendance it recognises:
- the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the college's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;
- the interplay between attendance and wider college improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting students with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged students;
- the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students and communicating these regularly and effectively to students and parents;
- 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.

2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the college to record attendance and absence. It is in accordance with current legislation and the following statutory guidance:
- Education (Independent college Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Education (Student Registration Regulations) 2006;
- Equality Act 2010; and
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Working together to improve college attendance (DfE, applies from September 2024);
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);
- college behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);
- Children missing education (DfE, September 2016);
- Supporting students with medical conditions at college (DfE, August 2017);
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and college staff (DfE, February 2024);
- Mental health and behaviour in colleges (DfE, November 2018);
- Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for colleges (DfE, February 2023);
- Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);

- Remote education guidance (DfE, January 2023); and

- SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015)].

2.3 This policy is published on the college's website and is also available to parents of current and prospective students from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Adam Cross – adam.cross@mpw.ac.uk) on request. Large print or other accessible formats can also be made available.

3 College responsibilities

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

3.2 The college will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every student and consistently communicating those expectations to students and parents. It will also recognise the achievement of those students who have excellent levels of attendance.

3.3 The college 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 college's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

3.4 The college 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 students at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

3.5 Where there are challenges to attendance, the college will work effectively and respectfully with students, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them. An Attendance Plan detailing strategies and additional support which aims to assist in overcoming barriers to attendance will be agreed with parents.

3.6 Where students of compulsory school age are likely to miss more than 15 days of schooling (whether consecutive or not), the local authority will be informed.

3.7 UKVI

The college will observe the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Maintaining satisfactory attendance is part of the visa conditions for students studying under a visa in the UK. It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure accurate attendance monitoring and prompt follow up occur across all courses.

- The college will cease to sponsor students who repeatedly fail in meeting attendance requirements.

- The college will cease to sponsor any Sponsored student who misses 10 consecutive contact points. A contact point is defined as an entire teaching day (Monday to Friday). In addition to timetabled classes, contact points may also include meetings with residential staff or welfare/pastoral staff if necessary in welfare cases.

- A student who has missed 10 consecutive contact points may, in exceptional circumstances, be allowed back into the college. The student will be required to document any reason for the absences and continued sponsorship will be at the discretion of the Principal.

- When the college ceases to sponsor a student, this will be reported to UKVI via the SMS and the Student/Child Student visa will then be curtailed by UKVI.

4 Staff responsibilities

4.1 All staff

- The college ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with students and parents about it.

- The college provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

4.2 The following staff have specific responsibility for monitoring and managing attendance:

The Attendance Lead (School Attendance Champion) (Adam Cross, Vice Principal And DSL) will:

- have a clear vision for improving attendance and review the college's attendance policy;

- establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and ensure that the college's systems are followed by all staff;

- regularly monitor and evaluate college attendance, including the efficacy of the college's strategies and processes;

- have oversight of and analyse attendance data;

- communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to students and parents.

- liaise with the student, parents and Personal Tutor in the drawing up of individual student Attendance Plans that support students in overcoming barriers to attendance;

- work with the Personal Tutors in overseeing the daily implementation of the support detailed in Attendance Plans;

- in some cases, provide direct support to students in following through strategies detailed in their Attendance Plan.

The Personal Tutors will:

- liaise with students and parents on all matters relating to attendance following up any concerns with all parties firmly, consistently and with sensitivity;

- monitor and evaluate individual student attendance, challenging non-attendance, exploring the issues relating to it and setting targets for improvement;

- work with the student, parents, and the Attendance Lead in formulating individual student Attendance Plans to address non-attendance detailing any additional reasonable support that can be put in place;

- offer additional check-ins and monitoring for students with poor attendance;

- monitor the success of the Attendance Plan and adjust it accordingly;

- report back on individual cases to the Attendance Lead at the Attendance Review meetings.

The Attendance Administrator will:

- check that all registers have been completed for all sessions throughout the day;

- Inform parents about unauthorised absences

- record authorised absences and their reasons;

- Assist the Personal Tutors and Attendance Lead with administrative duties related to attendance.

5 Student responsibilities

5.1 Attendance is important to student attainment, wellbeing and development. The college therefore has high expectations of students as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

5.2 Students should be aware that:

- they are expected to arrive on time and attend all registration periods and timetabled lessons;

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

- any unexplained absence will be followed up;

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

    o offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance in the form of an Attendance Plan;

    o communication with parents;

    o reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and

    o sanctions against them or their parents in line with the college's behaviour policies.

- if students are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending college or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, though they should in the first instance speak to their Personal Tutor. Students are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

5.3 Students who are of compulsory school age:
- are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each college day;

- should not leave a lesson or the college site without permission or otherwise in accordance with college rules.

6 Parental responsibilities

6.1 The college expects all parents to:
- make any application for authorised absence at the earliest opportunity by calling the main college number and speaking to one of the college administrators.

- notify the college 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

- if attendance has been raised as an issue, co-operate with the college to explore possible barriers to attendance and to work with the college to formulate, review and implement an Attendance Plan.

6.2 Parents of students in Years 10 and 11 should:
- ensure their child attends college every day by 8.50 for morning registration;

6.3 Parents of students in the Sixth Form should:
- ensure that their child attends all their timetabled sessions throughout the week;

7 Additional needs

7.1 The college recognises some students may find it harder than others to attend college and will work with those students and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships, working together to put the right support in place.
In many instances of absence because of a mental health issue, attendance may serve to help with the underlying issue as much as being away from college may exacerbate it. It is also the case that a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxiety about attending in the future.

7.2 The college will make reasonable adjustments where a student has a disability that affects their ability to attend college regularly, including a mental health issue. This will form part of an Attendance Plan designed to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. The plan will be agreed with and reviewed by the college and parents regularly.

7.3 In exceptional circumstances, a temporary part-time timetable may be considered as part of a re-integration Attendance Plan. Such an arrangement for students of compulsory school age will always be reported to the local authority and absence will be treated as 'absence with leave'.

7.4 In instances of long-term or repeated absences for the same medical reason, the college may request evidence of a medical assessment to assist in ascertaining whether the student requires additional support to help them to attend more regularly, and whether the illness is likely to prevent the student from attending for extended periods.

7.5 The college, parents and, where appropriate, the local authority will work together to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a student's education, health and care plan is accessed.

7.6 Where barriers are outside of the college's control, the college will work with parents and students to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

8 Attendance procedures

8.1 Tutors are required to log student attendance in every lesson. Lessons should be registered within the first 5 minutes of the class. A member of the secretarial team will follow up unregistered lessons using Notify alerts, Teams, email, phone calls to the member of staff and finally going to the classroom to ask them to complete the register. *See Appendix A in the Missing Pupil policy.*

8.2 Tutors should log students as present or absent. All other absence codes should be entered by the administration team in advance of the lesson or, if a parent or guardian has not called/emailed to give a reason for the absence, a phone call is made home as soon as possible during the missed lesson, preferably within the first 20 minutes.

8.3 Parents/guardians of students of compulsory school age who are absent from college from registration or any timetabled lesson, will be contacted by a member of the attendance team to ascertain their whereabouts. If a student is considered to be "missing" then the missing student policy is put into place. *See Missing Pupil policy for details.*

9 Monitoring attendance

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

- monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to students and families;
- use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with students and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);
- conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;
- benchmark attendance data at whole college, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- monitor the impact of college-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and
- provide data and reports to the Board to support its work.

10 Managing Non-attendance

10.1 The college expects a student's attendance at timetabled sessions to be no less than 96% in an academic year. A clear process is employed for addressing non-attendance with students moving through levels of concern depending on their level of attendance, individual circumstances, reasons for non-attendance, and engagement with their Attendance Plan.

10.2 The Attendance Plan records the reasons for and/or barriers to attendance, as well as the reasonable adjustments and support measures the college is able to offer that will enable the student to overcome them. It also details targets and has regular review points built into it.

Level of Concern	
Level 1	The PT meets with the student and parents are notified of the concern. Attendance concerns are discussed with parents and an Attendance Plan is drawn up detailing any reasonable support to be put in place, as well as agreed set targets for improvement.
Level 2	The DoS reviews the student's engagement with the Attendance Plan. Concerns are followed up in a meeting with the Attendance Lead, the student and parents and the Attendance Plan is reviewed.
Level 3	The Attendance Lead or the Principal meet again with the student and parents to review the student's engagement with the Attendance Plan.
Red Flag	If the student has been unable to engage with their Attendance Plan, the Principal may recommend that they be withdrawn. In cases of refusal to engage with the Attendance Plan, the Principal may decide to exclude them from the college.

11 Training

11.1 The college ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff 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:
- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and
- the college's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

11.2 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:
- the law and requirements of colleges including on the keeping of registers;
- the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to students who need it;
- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and
- any additional training that would be beneficial to support students and student cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

11.3 The college maintains records of all staff training.

12 Information sharing

12.1 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. For example, the college is

legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority and with inspection bodies approved by the Secretary of State.

13 Record keeping and confidentiality

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

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

14 Other relevant documents

- Safeguarding policy
- Risk assessment (welfare) policy
- Missing student policy
- Academic support policy
- Disability policy
- Policy for promoting good behaviour
- Student code of conduct

Appendix 1: College Arrangements

1 Managing attendance

1.1 The college monitors, records and shares data about student attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect students and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law and set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the college for the relevant time period as stated by law.

1.2 The college expects all students of compulsory school age to be present for the whole of the college day, usually from registration at 8.45am to close at 4pm, but this period may be extended, for example for out of college clubs, sports fixtures or college trips.

2 The role of parents / carers

2.1 The college expects all Parents to:
- make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
- notify the college 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
- cooperate with the college to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

2.2 Parents of compulsory school age students should ensure their child attends college by 8.50am for morning registration;

2.3 Parents of sixth-form students should ensure that their child attends college for all of their scheduled classes;

3 Registration and attendance checks

3.1 Morning registration for compulsory school age students is at 8.50am. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes after the start of morning registration.

3.2 Afternoon registration for compulsory school age students is at 12.50pm for year 10 or 1.50 pm for year 11.

3.3 Registers are also 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.

3.4 The college uses iSAMS as its Attendance Management System.

4 Reporting absence

4.1 If a student is to be absent from college for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the administration team on the main college phone number (0121 454 9637) on the first morning of absence;

4.2 Where a student is ill, the administration team should be notified of the nature of the illness.

5 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence

5.1 Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 3.

6 Managing absence

6.1 A clear process is employed for addressing non-attendance with students moving through levels of concern depending on their level of attendance, individual circumstances, reasons for non-attendance, and engagement with their Attendance Plan.

6.2 The Attendance Plan records the reasons for and/or barriers to attendance, as well as the reasonable adjustments and support measures the college is able to offer that will enable the student to overcome them. It also details targets and has regular review points built into it.

7 Authorised absences

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

8 Applications for an authorised leave of absence

8.1 Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the college day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Administration Team, who will liaise with the Personal Tutor and the Attendance Lead.

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

8.3 Apart from illness, no student should be away from college without prior permission from their parent or guardian.

8.4 Dental or medical appointments should be made during college holidays except in cases of emergency when the Administration Team should be informed.

8.5 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Administration Team and Personal Tutor in liaison with the Attendance Lead to determine the length of the time the student is permitted to be away from college. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. See section 3 of Appendix 3 for more details.

8.6 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 students belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

9 Reporting duties

9.1 The college has statutory reporting obligations if a student fails to regularly attend their absence is unauthorised. The college must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.

9.2 In the event that a student holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the college under the Points Based System goes missing, the college will report to UKVI if the student misses ten consecutive expected contact points. *Note: Children being absent from college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including exploitation. Exploitation can affect any child, however international students may be at greater risk than other children. UKVI's Student Sponsor Guidance states that a school must have appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection from exploitation of the children whom it sponsors to study in the UK under the Child Student route.*

9.3 Each time the college's attendance register is completed in the morning it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.

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

9.5 Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing Pupil policy and the Safeguarding policy if any absence of a student from the college gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

Appendix 2: Admission register

1 Admission register

1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the college Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the college will:

- maintain an admission register of all students (of both compulsory and non-compulsory college age) admitted to the college (also known as the college roll); and

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

1.2 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.

1.3 The college must ensure that every entry in the college'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 college year that it relates to.

1.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every student in the college, including their date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school they last attended.

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

1.6 Where the college notifies the local authority that the name of a student of compulsory school age is to be deleted from the admission register, the college must provide it with the following information:

- the full name of the student;

- the address of the student;

- the full name and address of any parent the student normally lives with;

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

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

- name of the student's other or future school and student's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;

- the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the student's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 3: Attendance register

1 Attendance register

1.1 The college records and monitors the attendance of all students (both of compulsory and non-compulsory college age including boarders) in accordance with the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024.[1]

1.2 The college 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.

1.3 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.

1.4 The college will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with students and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

1.5 The college is required by law to take attendance for students of compulsory school age and to register them twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every student is:
  - physically present in college when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
  - absent from the college when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or
  - attending a place other than the college; or
  - absent.

1.7 The circumstances in which a student may be recorded as attending a place, other than the college, can include:
  - Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
  - For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the college and supervised by a member of college staff;
  - Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
  - Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the college as part of the student's education;
  - Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording absence

2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 relating to:
  - leaves of absence;
  - other authorised reasons;
  - unable to attend college because of unavoidable cause;
  - unauthorised absence.

3 Remote education

3.1 The college is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.

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

3.3 In the limited circumstances when the college decides to use remote education for individual students when they are absent, the following will be considered:

- ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the college, parents or carers, potentially students, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the student has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;

- if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to college, 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 student back to college at the earliest opportunity;

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

3.4 Students who are absent from college and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The college will keep a record of, and monitor student'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 student's reintegration to college.

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

4 Unauthorised absence

4.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the college is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

- holiday has not been authorised by the college or is in excess of the period determined by the Attendance Lead;

- the reason for absence has not been provided;

- a student is absent from college without authorisation;

- a student has arrived in college after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.