

WORCESTER SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Attendance Policy and Punctuality Procedures

Date: May 2026

1. Scope

- 1.1 These procedures apply to students enrolled on all courses at Worcester Sixth Form College.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Attendance is compulsory at all timetabled and arranged learning opportunities such as trips, visits, work experience, workshops, Impact sessions, tutorials and assemblies. These comprise an integral part of a student's study programme and they are expected to be punctual in their attendance to them.

Students whose attendance falls below 95% in any aspect of the programme of study is challenged by their teachers and followed up by the tutor. Low attendance or poor punctuality constitutes a breach of the Student Code of Conduct which may result in disciplinary action.

Consideration may be made where a student has a disability or diagnosed special educational need. Where this applies guidance from the Admissions and Fitness to Study Policy will be followed, and outcomes agreed on an individual basis. Any reasonable adjustments will be made with the intention of maintaining the highest possible overall levels of attendance.

Work commitments should be arranged outside of the College day (Term Time Mon - Fri 8.50am - 4.10pm). The College recommends students work no more than 12 hours per week alongside their academic studies.

Dates of external examinations are fixed and cannot be changed. Absence from examinations may put the students place at College in jeopardy as this breaches the Student Conduct Policy.

3. Types of Absence

3.1 Planned absence

a) Holidays and special leave

Students should not take holidays during term-time.

If planned absence is unavoidable students must obtain a Planned Student Absence form from the Tutorial Hub 10 days in advance. If the period of planned absence stretches across College holidays and term time the College must still be informed using the planned absence procedure. Where the absence is less than 5 days permission will be considered by a tutor. For longer periods of absence Head of Year consent is required. Upon its issue students should be told that the form must initially be completed by the parent(s), and then shared by them with their teachers so that they can add any directed work to the form which can be completed in their absence. Students should be informed by both pastoral and teaching staff that this will not replace lost learning resulting from class absence, and that possession of the form does not constitute permission. If permission is granted the tutor or Head of Year will sign the form and give a copy to the student who should return it to the Tutorial Hub. Concerns about the impact on the planned absence will be communicated to parents. In some cases absences, planned or otherwise, may lead to withdrawal of the student from College. In these instances the circumstance should be brought to the attention of a senior member of staff, and any action discussed and agreed upon by them beforehand.

Permission will not be given where students arrange holidays on their own, with friends or family members other than parents or carers. Students who do this will be subject to disciplinary procedures and may be excluded from College. Permission cannot be obtained retrospectively.

The College calendar for term-time and holidays is shared with all students and parents and available through the College website. Applications for more than one extended planned absence of more than 5 days in any one academic year will be denied.

b) Work experience

If a student is planning absence from lessons in order to gain work experience this must be pre-arranged with the College work experience coordinator by visiting Student Services. Sufficient notice must be provided of this to allow the College to ensure all appropriate checks and administration has been carried out before the absence. Students are expected to give the Work Experience Agreement form to their teachers so that they can add any directed work to the form which should be completed in their absence. Attendance at work experience is subject to the same requirements as College attendance.

c) Religious Observance

The College will record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the students' religious body (not the parents). If a religious body sets a single day for a religious observance this will be authorised by the College and will not

adversely impact attendance. Where additional absence for this reason is requested parent notification will still be expected but will count against their overall College attendance.

Religious pilgrimage requests will be considered by a Head of Year and the advanced planned absence process will be required.

d) **College organised trips**

When students are absent due to College organised activity, the trip organiser will complete the required paperwork to ensure registers are marked accurately. Students must ensure they have completed and returned a signed parental permissions slip for the trip.

e) **Sports fixtures and events**

Students who wish to undertake activities that are not organised by the college must tell their tutor and teachers. Parent notification will be expected and where the duration is likely to be more than a day the advanced absence process should be followed.

f) **Medical appointments**

Students must try to ensure that routine personal appointments, such as doctors, dentists and driving lessons take place outside the timetable wherever possible. Where this is unavoidable a tutor must be informed together with appropriate evidence, such as an appointment notification, and given to their tutor. Students are responsible for informing their teacher and ensuring they are clear about learning and material they need to catch up on. They will be made aware by their tutor that this will still impact their attendance record.

3.2 **Sickness absence**

If a student is absent due to sickness parents are asked to contact the college on the morning of the absence. This can be made via the Parent Portal, phone call, or by emailing the relevant tutor. In order to verify authenticity a phone call is the preferred method of contact.

If a student is sent home because he/she is unwell the person responsible for taking the decision must direct the student to the Tutorial Hub so that parents can be informed and appropriate arrangements and safeguards put in place.

3.3 **Other absence**

Absence due to unexpected events that the College is aware of will be treated on an individual basis by the College. In some circumstances a blanket approach to the registering of attendance may be undertaken.

4. **Responsibilities**

All student attendance will be monitored by the relevant teachers and their tutor.

4.1 Students are responsible for attending all required classes punctually, and communicating with their teachers on matters relating to their

attendance and punctuality. If a student is absent without permission they are expected to meet their tutor upon their return to college.

- 4.2 Parents/carers are asked to work with the College to help students achieve full attendance. When the student they are responsible for is unable to attend College we ask them to notify the College at their earliest convenience and keep the tutor/HOY informed of an expected return. Guidance for parents and carers regarding reporting absence procedure can be found in the *Guide for Parents* and the College website.
- 4.3 Teaching staff are required to record absence promptly and accurately within the lesson. It is not expected that teachers provide learning material where students inform them at short notice that they will be absent from lessons, but should challenge students who have not notified them of planned absence, or followed up with work that should be completed as a result of any absence. Occasionally, teachers may be asked to provide work that a student can complete outside of lessons at the direction of the College.

5. Communication and Monitoring process

- a) Teachers use the class register to identify and record student attendance and absence from lessons. They can communicate absence using the appropriate register mark and using the email/text facility on the register. Where students are on attendance alerts this must be done as soon as possible at the beginning of the lesson. If a teacher notices a pattern of absence from lessons they should contact a tutor directly. Concerns should be raised where repeated absence occurs, and/or where this is associated with other poor study habits or behaviour issues.
- b) Tutors are the main point of support regarding student attendance and monitor up to date attendance data using the College Portal. They will contact the student and parents as soon as they are aware that absence has occurred. Where possible this will be made by phone. However, a variety of other forms of communication are used depending on the severity and priority of the issue including text, email and letters. Parent notified absence will be checked where appropriate by the tutor.
- c) Some students who are a significant safeguarding risk are placed on an attendance alert. All staff must give priority to the prompt and accurate recording and intervention of their attendance, or absence, from lessons.
- d) Tutors will respond to Concerns raised by staff when they include attendance issues promptly and with the action that has been agreed or undertaken.
- e) When unauthorised absence presents as a repeated pattern on more than one occasion, and/or attendance falls below 85%, parents will be informed and the disciplinary process followed (see Student Conduct Policy D, Strategies, Procedures and Sanctions).
- f) The College will send a daily automated email to parents where a student has been absent from ten percent or more of their timetabled lessons in any given day (this is approximately one lesson).

6. Punctuality

A student will be considered late if they arrive after the start of the session. Good punctuality means that everyone is ready to begin at the exact start time with no loss of the learning. Over the course of the year prompt starts enable both staff and students to use the full timetabled contact teaching periods. This can make a real difference to students seeking additional time to discuss learning content in order to improve their understanding.

All lateness will be recorded on registers for any session throughout the day. A student who is persistently late will be seen by their tutor and set a target for improvement. Lateness is recorded as cumulative lost learning on the Portal and will be treated in the same way as absence. Therefore, if the student fails to improve their punctuality, the disciplinary process will be followed.

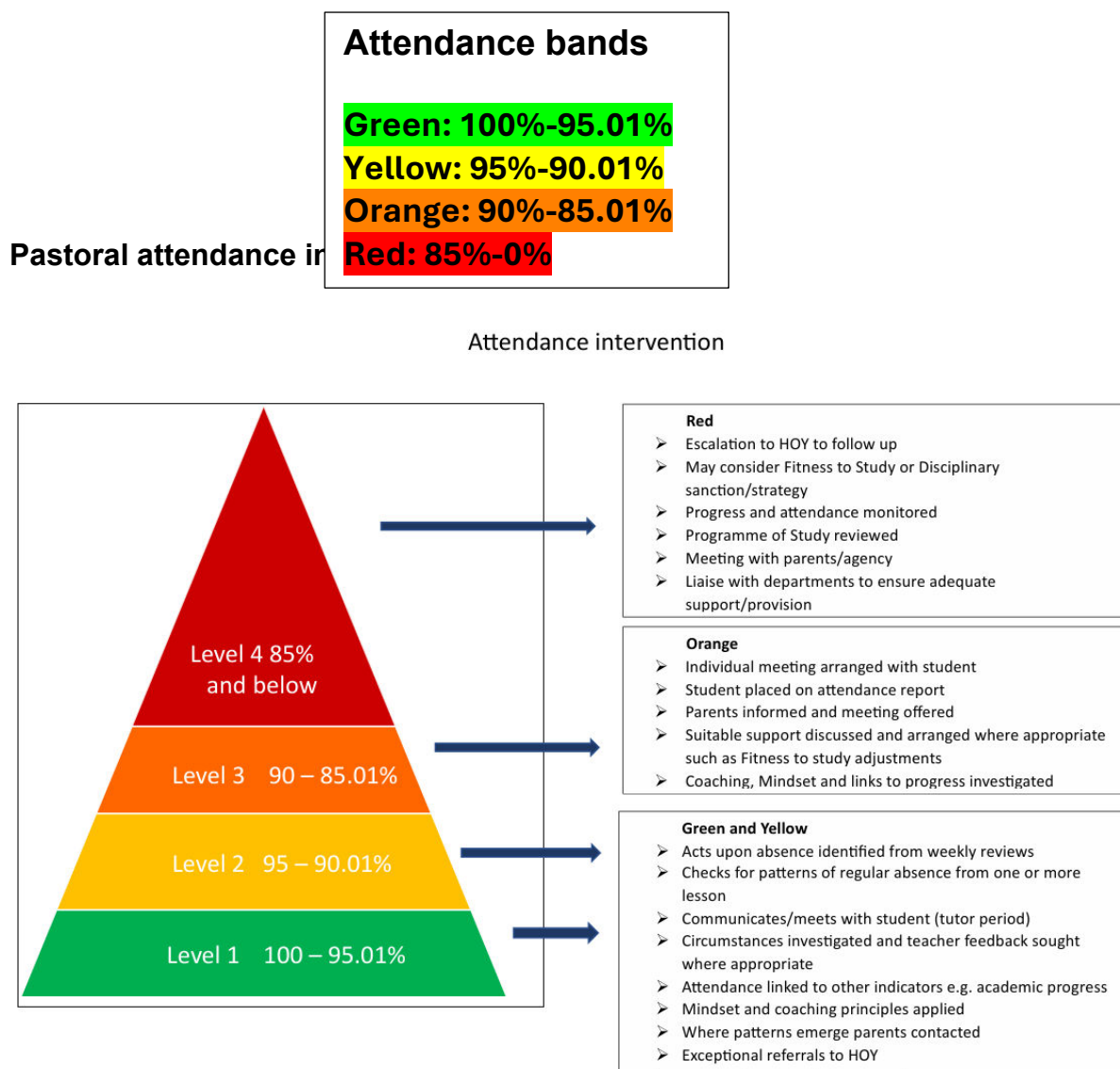
Teachers are expected to challenge all lateness or absence, and enforce the College knock and wait policy when students arrive more than 5 minutes late to lessons (10 minutes where the lesson starts at 8.50 am). If lateness could not be challenged by teachers on entry it should not be overlooked and challenged at a convenient moment. Students who attend a lesson but leave before the end will be marked as having done so.

6.4 Consequent Actions

- a) Tutors will meet with students who demonstrate repeated absence or lateness to lessons. Action taken may include: contacting/meeting parents, positive behaviour intervention, liaising with teaching staff, issuing attendance/punctuality reports.
- b) Tutors will record a summary of the meeting with a student, and any action undertaken, as a Pastoral Memo on the College Portal. Where attendance or punctuality has been raised through an Academic Concern the action taken will be referred to within the Concern as well.
- c) Repeated failure to attend lessons will be treated as a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and the disciplinary process contained within should be followed.
- d) The College may withdraw payment of examination entries if it is concluded that the chances of success have been hampered by attendance that falls below an appropriate threshold.
- e) Significant absence from lessons or lateness may jeopardise a student's ability to progress with their current programme of study.
- f) If a student is absent for four consecutive weeks and does not make contact with the College, the Head of Year will send out communication to establish whether the student wishes to return. If the student indicates that they do not wish to return, or does not respond within five working days, they may be removed from the college register. Exit interviews will be arranged by the Head of Year and a member of the careers team wherever possible.
- g) If a student has a long-term health condition which impacts their ability to attend lessons this will be reviewed under the Fitness to Study policy. Medical evidence in support of any adjustments will be considered and retained securely on the Student Portal.

6.5 Attendance bands

The College uses bands of attendance in line with the Heart of Mercia Trust in determining levels of attendance intervention:



6.6 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team. Where significant alterations are intended it will be presented for approval to the Local Governing Body.

6.7 Relevant Documents and Policies

Relevant policies and documents which are not found in this policy or appendices are:

- Student Conduct Policy
- Admissions and Fitness to Study Policy
- Curriculum and Programmes of Study Policy
- Learning Agreement

These are available on the College Portal or can be requested from College staff.