THE NATIONAL MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE

ATTENDANCE and PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This policy which applies to the whole college including boarding is publicly available on the college website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the College Office.

Legal Status:

- This policy complies with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations currently in force

Monitoring and review:

This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal and Vice Principal.

This policy was last reviewed and agreed in September 2021 and will next be reviewed no later than September 2023 or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Introduction

- We comply with the UKVI criteria regarding the admission to and attendance of students at the National Mathematics and Science College.
- We expect all Students on roll to attend every day, when the college is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
- We do all we can to encourage students to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards learning. To this end, we strive to make our college a happy and rewarding experience for all Students.
- The Board of Governors are responsible for making sure the college keeps admission and attendance registers in accordance with the regulatory requirements. Our attendance register records which students are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the college day.
- This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- The college calendar and dates when the college is open can be accessed from the home page of our website. Alternatively, our term dates and college calendar can be obtained from reception. College emergency closures for such things as extreme weather will also be published on the home page of our website.

1. **Rationale**

    1.1. The National Mathematics and Science College places great emphasis upon high levels of attendance and punctuality, believing this to be a vital component in ensuring students gain maximum benefit from their college experience, as well as preparing them for later life in the workplace.

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2. **Attendance Reporting and Recording**

2.1. Form Tutors and the Miss Charlie Turner (Assistant Principal - Pastoral) have a key role to play in encouraging attendance. This encouragement will take many forms, such as individual discussions with students, work with the form and with year groups in assembly.

2.2. The Assistant Principal will regularly review the attendance of students and liaise with parents if they have concerns. All students should aim to have 100% attendance; the aspirational college target is 97.5%. If individual attendance drops below 95% the Assistant Principal will contact parents to establish if support is required in order for attendance to increase. If attendance continues to drop the Assistant Principal will work with the student and parents to improve attendance. In cases of persistent absence (less than 90% attendance as defined by the DFE (A guide to absence Statistics, May 2016), the Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement (ACE) team will be consulted, warning letters and fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents. Parents will need to work closely with the college until attendance improves to over 90%.

2.3. Patterns of absence are also closely monitored to establish whether a student is regularly absent on certain days (e.g. Mondays or Fridays).

2.4. Students are responsible for ensuring that they attend 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, parents / homestay guardians / boarding team are requested to notify the college as soon as possible by email. All absence must be explained by either the parent / guardian / homestay guardian / boarding staff. Students themselves may complete an absence request form for any planned absences (e.g. Open Days). Unplanned absence must be explained by email/phone by parents either in advance or on the day it occurs - failure to do so will solicit contact from the Assistant Principal with the parent to clarify the circumstances..

2.5. If a student is absent during their 1st period registration and the college has not been informed about the absence, the college will attempt that day to make contact with home to determine the reasons for and nature of the absence. All absences are followed up to ensure that proper safeguarding action is taken (where appropriate), to identify whether the absence is approved or not and to help the college identify the correct code to enter into the college's electronic register.

2.6. A student's absence from college must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming; if at all possible, medical and dental appointments for students during college hours should be avoided.

2.7. In the event of absence due to a medical or dental appointment, written advance notification should be made by the parent, using the Leave of Absence form on Orah, and the student should only be out of college for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

2.8. Parents will be promptly informed of any concerns which may arise over a student's attendance.

2.9. Registers are legal documents and uniformity, accuracy and promptness in their completion is required. Electronic registration is completed in each lesson by the class teacher. If a student fails to arrive before the registers close at 8.30 Period 1 (or for the student's 1st lesson in the case of Year 2), they will be marked as "absent". Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in college after the registers have closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the student will be marked as absent (or another absence code where appropriate).

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2.10. Should the electronic register fail, the class teacher should notify reception of any absentees within 10 minutes of the lesson start.

2.11. The system allows for the following reasons for absence:

3. Authorised Absences:

B   Educated off-site (not dual reg.)

D   Dual Registered – at another educational establishment

C   Other authorised circumstances

E   Excluded but no alternative provision made

H   Family holiday (agreed)

I   Illness

J   Interview

L   Late (before registers closed)

M   Medical/ dental appointments

P   Approved sporting activity

R   Religious observance

S   Study leave

T   Traveller absence

V   Educational visit or trip

W   Work experience

4. Unauthorised Absences:

4.1. Any other absence is regarded as 'unauthorised' and is noted on the student's college report and also in the college's official absence figures sent to the DfE in the termly census.

5. Children Missing from Education

5.1. Where a student has ten consecutive days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken to establish their whereabouts, the college will make an immediate referral to the Local Authority.

5.2. If a further ten days of attempted tracking by the Local Authority results in failure to locate the student, the college will at this stage inform the Local Authority that the student is to be deleted from the admission register and lodge the CTF on the College database entering xxxxxxx in the box for destination which places the student on the list of 'Children Missing from Education'.

5.3. If the student is located by the Local Authority, the college will work with the family making every effort to establish a return to education.

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5.4. If during the period of non-attendance the student has registered with another school, the college will delete the student from the admission register and transfer the CTF in the normal way to the new school.

6. Instructions to Staff

6.1. When an email or telephone message has been received by reception, they will update the electronic register with the relevant code. Absence notes are not required in cases where absence has been previously agreed using a Leave of Absence form.

6.2. If a student has a change of address and/or telephone number the college administrator must be informed immediately and the iSAMS database updated.

6.3. If there is any doubt about completing the register see any of the Senior Leadership Team

7. Lesson Attendance

7.1. All staff should record attendance on iSAMS for each lesson taught. These records may be used to check attendance by the Assistant Principal, as a point of information to parents and for legal reasons.

8. Holidays During Term Time

8.1. DfE Guidance (2019) states that Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If the Principal grants a leave request, it will be for the Principal to determine the length of time that the child can be away from college. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.

8.2. At NatMatSci, parents are strongly discouraged from taking students on holiday in term time. The correlation between good attendance and effective learning is very strong and missing lessons can lead to significant gaps and consequent underperformance in examinations. In exceptional circumstances, parents may complete the absence form in advance explaining why exceptional provision should be granted. The Principal will only authorise the absence if they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case, which warrant the length of leave being requested.

8.3. Penalty notices can be issued in instances where a child takes an unauthorised leave of absence. Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence are issued in accordance with Coventry County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

9. Students Returning to College after a Prolonged Absence

9.1. The college is aware of the specific needs of students returning to college after a prolonged absence. The needs are likely to be, but are not limited to: emotional / physical, social and academic/organisational.

9.2. Each student is an individual case. The Assistant Principal and pastoral team will examine the social context of the student's return e.g. re-establishing friendships. The Assistant Principal will also check that the student is able to cope with a full day at college and the extent to which support is required.

9.3. All subject teachers will be informed of the student's return.

9.4. Subject teachers will be asked to stagger the load for such students and to arrange for missing

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work to be provided via the easiest possible method, e.g. photocopying another student's work.

9.5. Form Tutors, teaching staff and SLT will monitor closely the student's progress during the term following his/her return. Any perceived difficulty will be dealt with by the most appropriate teacher under the aegis of the Assistant Principal. Parents may be contacted at this stage.

10. Punctuality

10.1. Student punctuality is to be expected at all times. All students are expected to arrive to Period 1 lessons by 8.30 am. Any student who is late must sign in at reception giving the reason for their lateness. The Assistant Principal Miss Turner will monitor these records closely and liaise with parents if individual students are late on a frequent basis and this may result in sanctions. For further details see the behaviour policy.

10.2. Staff: All staff should be on the premises by 8.10 a.m. to attend the weekly briefing session (Tuesday). Lessons should begin and end on time.

Definitions

Authorised absence
- An absence is classified as authorised when a student has been away from college for a legitimate reason and the college has received notification from a parent. For example, if a student has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the college to explain the absence.
- Only the college can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.
- Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a student out of college to go shopping during college hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence
- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a student is away from our college without the permission of both the college and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a student is away from college without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Monitoring and Review

In the absence of intermediate reviews due to changes in statutory guidance, this policy will be updated, reviewed, and approved by the Vice Principal every 2 years.

Vice Principal

Date Reviewed: *September 2022*
Date of Next Review: *September 2024*

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