Missing Student and Attendance Policy

Scope
This policy applies to Bootham Senior School. A separate policy exists for Bootham Junior School.

Notification of Absence

Illness
Parents are asked to email attendance@boothamschool.com or call 01904 623261 to notify school of absence due to illness. In the event of continuing illness, unless otherwise agreed should be notified each day of the absence.

Medical Appointments
Parents are asked to email attendance@boothamschool.com or call 01904 623261 in advance to notify school of all medical appointments.

Requests for Authorised Absences/Holidays
Parents are asked to email attendance@boothamschool.com in advance to request authorised absences or holidays, allowing sufficient time before the event for the request to be dealt with. These will be forwarded to the relevant staff member to obtain agreement. Students are responsible for notifying their teachers before such an absence and collecting any missed work.

Requests for absence up to a day in length, including Saturday mornings, may be authorised at the Tutors' discretion. This excludes absences attached to the start or end of a scheduled school holiday.

Requests for absences of a day or longer, or when attached to the start or end of a scheduled school holiday, may be authorised at the discretion of Helen Sharp, Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Given the generous length of our school holidays, it is not expected that parents will need to make requests for absences due to additional holiday time. Requests for additional holidays are unlikely to be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Teachers will not be asked to provide work for students taking holidays during term time.

Registration
Registration is expected to be completed for every period.

Teaching staff are expected to complete their iSAMs register within the first ten minutes of the lesson starting, using the Present, Late or Absent options and applying the relevant code and a note if applicable. Staff who are unable to complete their iSAMs register for any reason should either phone or send a student to the Attendance Officer to verbally report their register. The Attendance Officer will then complete iSAMs on their behalf.

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Person responsible:	Deputy Head Pastoral
Review Group	Leadership Meeting
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The Attendance Officer will follow up any registers not completed, and check the following where appropriate:

- The sign in sheet at Reception
- The Health Centre
- Music lessons
- LAMDA
- Library/Learning Support/EAL
- Tutor/Head of Year
- Boarding staff
- Toilets (with an accompanying member of staff)
- DSL/Deputy Head (Pastoral)

The Attendance Officer will contact home as soon as possible once the above investigations have been exhausted. Parents may be asked to contact their child by mobile phone if appropriate.

If the student is still not accounted for the Deputy Head (Pastoral)/DSL will be informed immediately and will decide (in consultation with Tutor and Head of Year) and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) whether to contact the Police. This decision should be taken within an hour of the Deputy Head being informed. If a student presents with additional vulnerabilities (e.g. Mental Health Concerns/SEND), the decision to contact the police may be taken more swiftly.

A daily and weekly 'mop up' of the registers will be conducted to identify any anomalies over the day/week that need to be rectified/followed up on.

Register Codes for Absent Students

N – No Reason Yet Provided For Absence

This code is used when a student is absent from a lesson and the reason has not yet been established. Once a student is accounted for the status should be changed to Present, or the student signed out of school.

@ - Health Centre? H1- am H2 -pm

This code is used when a student is absent from a lesson and the teacher knows or suspects that the student is at the Health Centre. Once this is verified, the status is changed to Present.

H1 – Confirmed illness (AM)

This code is used when we are informed that a Boarding Student is absent from school due to illness and is in the Health Centre or a day student has attended during a lesson. The 1 relates to AM sessions.

H2 – Confirmed illness (PM)

This code is used when we are informed that a Boarding Student is absent from school due to illness and is in the Health Centre or a day student has attended during a lesson. The 2 relates to PM sessions.

! – Drama?

This code is used when a student is absent from a lesson and the teacher knows or suspects that the student is at LAMDA. Once this is verified, the status is changed to Present.

Music? – Music?

This code is used when a student is absent from a lesson and the teacher knows or suspects that the student is at a music lesson. Once this is verified, the status is changed to Present.

Sport? – Sport?

This code is used when a student is absent from a lesson and the teacher knows or suspects that the student is at a fixture. Once this is verified, the status is changed to Present (if a HOME fixture) or signed out of school on a P Approved Sporting Activity (if an AWAY fixture).

--Other

Teaching staff use this code when they have information regarding an absence that they want to communicate to the Attendance Officer. The --Other code alerts the Attendance Officer to check the Notes section of the register for more information.

O – Unauthorised Absence

This code is used:

- When a College student hasn't registered in the Library for a study period P1 Tuesday or P4
- When a College student hasn't registered on the stairs for P4 Wednesday College PE registration

Two monitoring slips will be issued as a sanction in the above cases.

- A student who is missing school for an unknown or unauthorised reason when parents/guardians have been notified and it is agreed with the Deputy Head (Pastoral). A note will be added to the Out of School record explaining why this code has been used and parents/guardians will be informed.

R – Religious Observance

Students will be signed out of school if they are absent due to a religious festival or celebration.

H – Family Holiday (Agreed)

Students will be signed out of school if a family holiday during term time has been authorised by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

S – Study Leave

Students will be signed out of school if they are on authorised study leave, eg, for GCSE or A level exams.

E – Excluded

Students will be signed out of school if they have been externally excluded.

W – Work Experience

Students will be signed out of school if they are on authorised work experience arranged by school.

V – Educational Visit or Trip

Students will be signed out of school if they are on a school trip or visit.

I – Illness

Students will be signed out of school once we have been notified of absence from home due to ill health.

P – Approved Sporting Activity

Students will be signed out of school if they are attending an AWAY sporting fixture.

M – Medical / Dental Appointments

Students will be signed out of school if they are attending a medical or dental appointment.

G – Family Holiday (NOT Agreed)

Students will be signed out of school where a family holiday during term time has not been authorised by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

C – Other Authorised Absence

Students will be signed out of school if they have an absence authorised by the Tutor, Head of Year, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or other member of staff. A note will be added to the Out of School record explaining why this code has been used.

A – Exam

This code is used when a student is absent from a lesson and the teacher knows or suspects that the student is in an exam. Once this is verified, the status is changed to Present (if the exam is on site) or signed out of school on a C – Other Authorised Absence (if the exam is off site).

Students Leaving School During the Day

Students must come to Reception to sign out before leaving site for any reason (other than lunchtime leave when other arrangements are in place).

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If a student presents at Reception to sign out of school for any reason and we haven't had permission from a parent or guardian, we will give them a call to check before allowing them to leave site.

Student Illness During the School Day
Students feeling ill during the school day should report to the Health Centre. Medical staff will contact a parent or guardian to come and collect the student if they think it is necessary.

Activities
Students who will be at school but need to miss only their activity, parents are asked to email activities@boothamschool.com if their child needs to miss their activity and leave school at 4.00pm for any reason.

Activity registers are created by the Activities Coordinator, noting absences derived from:

- • iSAMs P4 registers
- • The Out of School list for anyone leaving school after the start of P4
- • Notifications from parents, guardians, the Boarding House or the Health Centre
- • Fixture team sheets
- • Orals timetable

A first check is carried out by the Activity Assistants using the registers at 4.15pm.

Any student absences identified during the first check are recorded on the database and a second check carried out by the Activity Assistants at 4.45pm.

If a student is unaccounted for, a follow up email is sent to the student copying in their Tutor asking them to provide an explanation within 48 hours. If students don't respond, or if the explanation isn't satisfactory, they will receive three Columns (Schoolrooms) or two Monitoring Slips (Seniors and College).

If a student repeatedly misses an activity he/she may not be allowed to go home at 4.00pm and may be required to stay in school until 5.15pm every day in Prep.

Reporting
The Data Officer will provide tutors with a summary of punctuality for their form on a Thursday morning for analysis and discussion in long registration.

The Attendance Officer may be asked to provide 'ad hoc' reports on individual students' attendance or punctuality by the Tutor, the Head of Year, the DSL, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or a class teacher.

The Attendance Officer will produce electronic attendance reports ahead of Heads of Year meetings dating back to the start of the academic year or the day after the last Heads of Year meeting, whichever is appropriate.

On the 1st of every month (or as soon after that as possible) the Attendance Officer will produce paper reports showing monthly attendance records to be retained in the School Register file in the School Office.

Senior Leadership Attendance Champion
In accordance with the 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance, the designated Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures. The Attendance

Champion:

- Sets a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishes and maintains effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school
- Monitors and evaluates attendance records, identifying trends and any subsequent actions required
- Monitors the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes with regard to attendance
- Ensures all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need
- Liaises with the designated Governor for monitoring attendance to ensure appropriate levels of oversight provided for attendance procedures

Attendance/Punctuality Concerns

Concerns regarding a students' attendance or punctuality should be raised with the Tutor in the first instance.

Tutors will make an initial judgment as to the level of the concern. They will decide how best to address the issue, ie, speaking to parents or guardians, involving the Head of Year, DSL or Deputy Head (Pastoral) or implementing attendance monitoring by the Attendance Officer.

Boarding

Boarding staff will use the above checks as appropriate. A separate procedure to be followed by boarding staff in the event of a boarder going missing in the evening or at the weekend is included in the Boarding Staff Handbook, and all Boarding Staff are made aware of this. In the event that the Head of Boarding considers it necessary to contact the police, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head must be consulted.

Children Missing from Education

The School will inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of ten school days or more.

It is good practice for a Tutor to make contact home after three days of absence to check all is well. After six days of absence, if they haven't already done so parents are asked to provide an explanation in writing and after ten days of absence are asked to provide a written explanation from the relevant medical professional. This contact may be made by the Attendance Officer, the Tutor, the Head of Year, the DSL or the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Note: This policy will be reviewed annually for matters of fact and process.

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Person responsible: Deputy Head Pastoral
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Appendix: Support First Approach to Attendance

The Support First approach prioritises early identification and removal of barriers to school attendance before any sanctions are considered. Attendance concerns are recognised through careful analysis of data alongside input from staff, pupils, and families. The school acknowledges that barriers to attendance are often complex and individual; therefore, responses must be flexible, creative, and tailored to each pupil.

Individualised support is central to this approach. Work is undertaken collaboratively with pupils and families to identify effective strategies to improve attendance. Adjustments may include changes to timetables, access to safe spaces or trusted adults, emotional wellbeing support, and phased reintegration into school life. Creative methods are also used to re-engage pupils, including alternative starting points to the school day that build confidence, reduce anxiety, and strengthen relationships.

Examples of support include helping in the library, contributing to practical subjects, reading with younger pupils, or taking on small responsibility roles. Pupils may also begin the day in a calm, supported environment and gradually increase their time in lessons through short, supported attendance periods.

These strategies serve as stepping stones towards full participation in school life. Each support plan includes clear goals and regular review points to ensure progress. Success is measured through improved attendance, increased engagement and confidence, and a strengthened sense of belonging. The underlying principle is that the school adapts its approach where necessary so that every child can successfully access education.

Autumn 2022:
Changes were made to the Registration process for Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Changes were made to the sanction imposed when students miss an activity.

Autumn 2023:
No changes required.

Autumn 2024:
The policy was revised to reflect current Attendance and Activities procedures.

Autumn 2025
Changes made to the section regarding students still not accounted for once parents have been contacted

Autumn 2026
Appendix 1 Support First Approach to Attendance

Date of last review: September 2026
Person responsible: Deputy Head Pastoral
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